JUBILEE 50

"When your children shall ask..."

Joshua 4:6

A History of the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches

"WHEN YOUR CHILDREN SHALL ASK"

Joshua 4:6

A History Of The Ontario Conference Of Mennonite Brethren Churches 1957 - 1982

Published For The Occasion Of The 50th Anniversary Of The Ontario Conference Of M.B. Churches - 1932-1982 . . .

EDITOR'S NOTE:

In the process of preparing for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of our Ontario Conference, a special committee was struck in 1980.

This Committee consisted of the Ontario Conference executive as well as a number of individuals who were co-opted in order to carry out various assignments.

Among the latter was the production of a Commemorative Plaque, a Historical Pageant, and a "Jubilee Book."

As the representative to the Ontario Conference of the Canadian M.B. Historical Commission, and as the Chairman of the Ontario Chapter of the M.B. Historical Society, it was thought logical that I should edit and write the history of our Conference for the occasion.

This I have attempted to do, but with a special note: this history covers almost exclusively the last 25 years, 1957-1982. Only brief synopses are presented of the first 25 years since these appear in a booklet "He Leadeth" edited by Henry H. Dueck in 1957.

I would like to thank particularly the representatives of the committees and churches for their co-operation and hard work. It has made the task much easier.

Edward Boldt, February, 1982.

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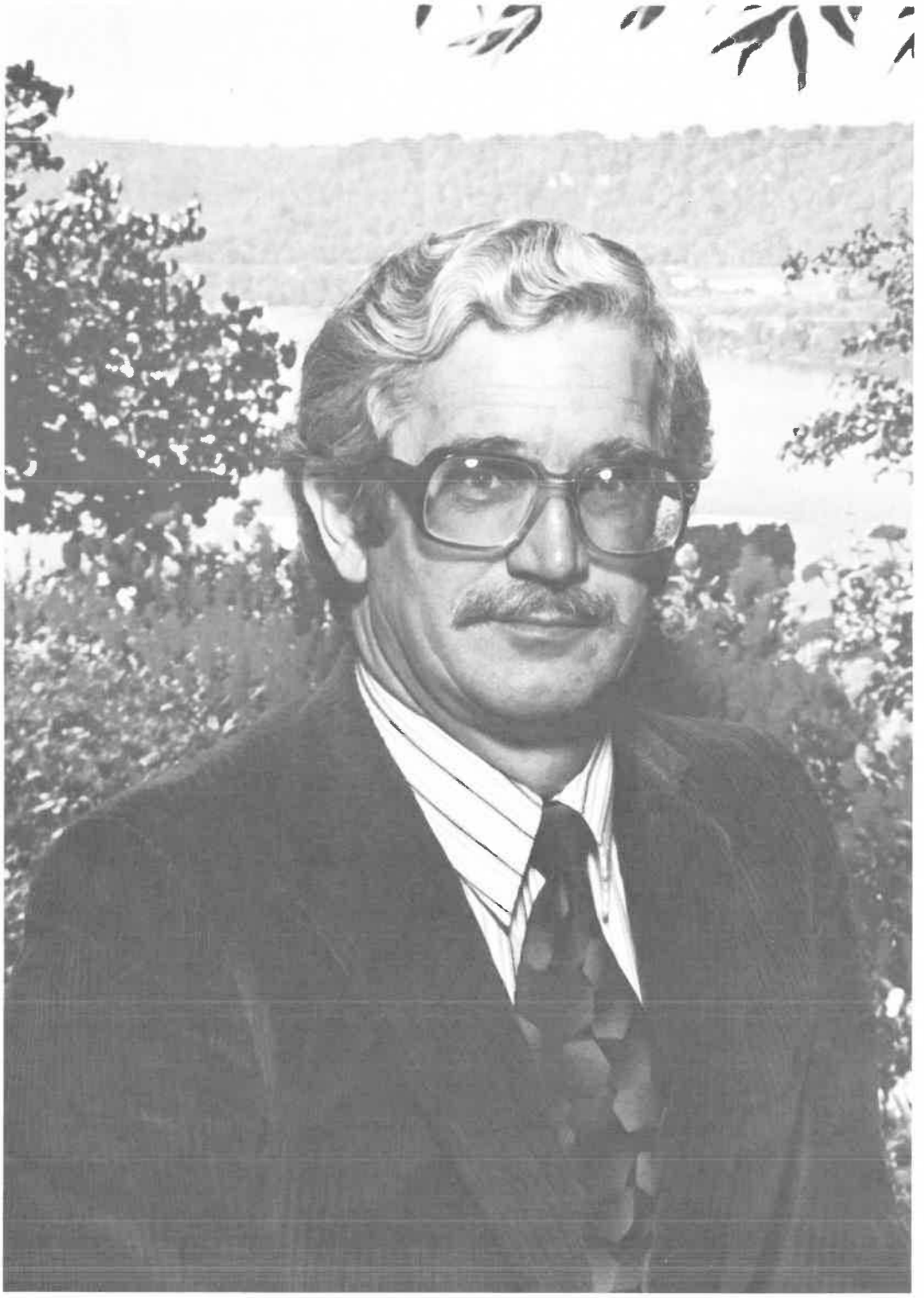
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Rev. Rudy Bartel
Conference Moderator - 1978-1982

"When your children shall ask!"

That involves two assumptions. First, that they will ask and second, that there will be answers.

What might they be asking?

Probably: "How did we get here?" and "Where are we going?"

This book and the celebrations during this Jubilee Year are part of the answer. Reading this book will tell how the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches got to where it is today. Jubilee celebrations, no doubt, have said rather clearly how we feel about it.

The clearest and most significant answer lies deeper, however, than books and celebrations. It lies in continuing ample evidence of a consistent commitment to the Lord and to the mandate He left His church. It also lies in the continuing operation and support of conference ministries in harmony with the call of Christ.

That is our firm intention!

By God's grace we call out as Joshua of old, "As for me and my house (the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches), we will serve the Lord!"

My God grant it.

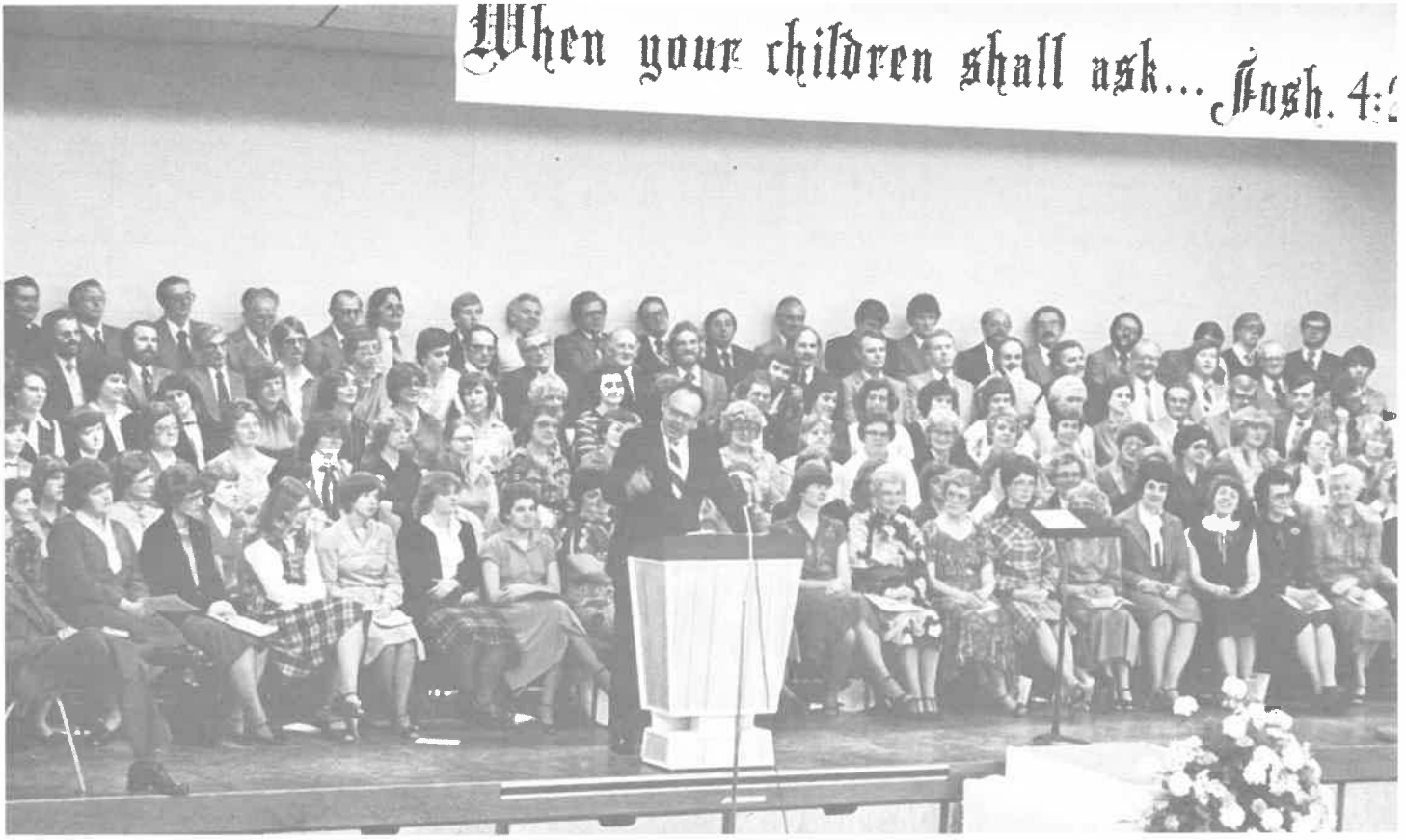
Rudy Bartel
Moderator

PICTURES ON THE FOLLOWING TWO PAGES:

The 1981 Jubilee Conference:

1. Conference Sunday - The assembly watching the unveiling of the commemorative plaque, Eden Auditorium. Sacred-Song Quartet sang.
2. Dr. Frank C. Peters - guest speaker, addressing the Assembly on Sunday Afternoon.
3. The Conference delegates at work - Saturday, in the Eden Chapel.


When your children shall ask... Josh. 4:21


When your children shall ask... Josh. 4:



A HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS - TO 1957

One hundred and twenty-two years have gone by since the Mennonite Brethren Church was founded in Russia, on January 6, 1860. Tremendous changes have occurred in the lives and experiences of our small brotherhood since that time. Today we live in a country in which we can experience all the blessings of freedom, religious, political, economic, and social. God has richly blessed us in so many ways, and so it is just fitting that we stand back, take stock, and reflect upon God's leading along the way. No, it has not always been as it is now, and in case we of the older generation forget, and if and when our children shall ask, we here record God's marvellous works as we have experienced them.

It was mid July, 1924, when the largest contingent of Mennonites arrived in Waterloo County, that is, the largest to arrive in Canada since World War I. Waterloo County, of course, had witnessed many other Mennonite arrivals in the years gone by, and as this latest group, just under 900 weary immigrants trundled their meagre belongings off of the train, they were met by hundreds of the earlier settlers. The generosity and friendly welcome of our people by the resident Mennonite community must never be forgotten. What a contrast to the departure from Russia!

No doubt, thronging through each of the minds of those disembarking from the train that hot July day, were memories, darkly vivid, of the past years in the old country. Every family had lost some relatives, if not through the ravages of war, then through the bloodier Russian Revolution, or the desperate 1921 to 1922 "Hungersnot" or period of starvation. Even though the latter years from 1922 to 1924 had seen some improvements in the economic situation for most of our people in Russia, when the opportunity to leave came, a large percentage took the opportunity to do so. Russia in 1924 was in a period of uncertainty. Early in the year, in January, Lenin had died, and his program of "reform", the "New Economic Policy" was being hotly disputed by many doctrinaire Bolshevists. Although claiming to have "religious freedom", the pressures upon the Mennonite communities seemed to belie the claims of the Communist Regime. No, it was time to leave, not just because of the recent horrors, but also due to the uncertain future. Since no major political obstacles existed at the time to prevent their departure, some 20,000 Mennonites left Russia, mainly for Canada, between 1924 and 1929.

And now some 900 had arrived in Waterloo County in Ontario. Conditions in Canada, fortunately, were rather opportune when our people arrived. The post-World War I economic slump was coming to an end and the political scene, although not stable under a minority Liberal government led by William Lyon MacKenzie King, was generally favourably inclined to immigrants. Their hosts, some taking along up to a dozen people, looked after their immediate needs, and were not hurt when our people began to form their own congregations.

The first Mennonite Brethren Church to be founded in Ontario was begun in St. Jacobs on May 25, 1925, that is, in the spring following the arrival of our people in Waterloo County. It was called the "Molotschna Mennonite Brethren Church" after the colony from which most had come in Russia. Soon the church began to meet in Kitchener, and soon other Mennonite Brethren Churches began to spring up throughout the rich southwestern region of Ontario. By 1932 it was decided, in view of the problems involved in founding and supervising new congregations, to establish an Ontario Conference.

The Mennonite Brethren Conference of Ontario was thus founded in Kitchener on January 31, 1932, representing 5 established and independent churches with a total membership of 287. The first Moderator was Brother Henry H. Janzen, Kitchener, the Vice-Moderator was Brother Abram Huebert, Leamington, the secretary, Brother Henry J. Penner, Kitchener, and the Treasurer, Brother Abram A. Teichroeb, New Hamburg.

As the years passed, various programs were introduced in the Conference, various programs in Christian Education, Missions, aid for the mentally ill, and many others. This story is told in Henry H. Dueck's "He Leadeth", and so we will now move on to the years, 1957 to 1982, the next quarter century of work for the Lord in our beautiful province of Ontario.

Many capable, dedicated, and faithful men and women have served our conference over the years, and thus I believe it is fitting that we should begin with the people leading our conference, the Executive.

THE CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE:

Basic Functions:

At the present time our Executive consists of a moderator, assistant-moderator, and secretary. As a rule, the conference treasurer also attends meetings of the executive. The moderator presides at regular sessions of the conference as well as at executive meetings and Council of Boards meetings. The assistant-moderator and secretary assist him in carrying out his duties.

Activities:

One of the major changes that has taken place in our conference executive in the past years is the establishment of a "Council of Boards". When we look at our Conference Yearbook for 1957 we see that at that time we still had a "Konferenzkommittee" of Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer. To look after conference business in interim a "Fuersorgikomitee" or Board of Reference and Counsel was utilized.

However, in 1967, a decade later, The Constitution Committee, at that time chaired by Brother Henry H. Dueck, proposed a new system, a Council of

THE 1981 ONTARIO CONFERENCE JUBILEE DELEGATES



GATHERED IN THE EDEN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE AUDITORIUM

The Conference Executive Seated - Centre - Row 2.



Conference Executive - 1982: L. to R. - Henry Pauls, Sec'y.; Ernest Friesen, Treas.; George Wichert, Ass't. Moderator; Rudy Bartel, Moderator.

Boards system. This proposal was made with a view to making possible decision-making at a higher level of significance so that a long wait between annual sessions would not be necessary. Each major board in addition to the Executive was included in the plan, and meetings would take place about twice a year between conference sessions. In 1968 this plan was implemented.

A further duty of the Conference Executive is to take the initiative in solving or anticipating problems as they arise in the Brotherhood. Over the past twenty-five years there has been no decrease in this involvement. As our Canadian society's complexity has increased so has the church's. Looking over the agenda of items, especially as they appear in the opening addresses of the various Moderators from year to year, we see a great variety of issues. In 1957 the out-going Moderator, Brother Isaac Ewert made mention of the raising of monies, evangelization within our own province, foreign missions, education in our Bible School and Eden, our Conference's Twenty-fifth Anniversary celebration, M.C.C., and interestingly, finished with reading a letter which he had sent to the then Prime Minister, Louis St. Laurent in which he assured the Prime Minister of the prayers of our people for our government.

A decade later on June 16, 1967. Moderator J.G. Baerg in his opening address was concerned over the "appalling moral decline, the tragic breakdown in the family, and the deteriorating political condition of the world"! Also included were such topics as the concerns over limitations in Christian Radio Broadcasting, co-ordinating our new Mid-week programs, the construction of a Senior Citizen's Home, a brief on Religious Education in Government schools, an additional class and teacher at Eden, and a special conference for our University students, guest speaker, Dr. Kenneth Kantzer.

Another decade later Moderator Isaac Block on June 18, 1977 voiced great concern for the over-riding inflation problem and how it made planning on a long-range basis very difficult. New pastors Abe Quiring, Virgil, Marvin Warkentin, Waterloo, and Bert Friesen, Evergreen Heights in Simcoe were welcomed to Ontario. New items included a "Funding Commission" for Eden, an Audio-Visual Library, preservation of historical documents at a central place (Kitchener), deficit budgeting, and the tabling of the matter of a Co-ordinator of Conference Ministries.

Finally, five years later on February 19, 1982, Moderator Rudy Bartel highlighted his opening address with the "Jubilee Year" theme, and thanked all those involved with the previous year's celebrations, both at the last February Conference and the April "Songfest"! He also referred to such issues as our hosting of the 55th General Conference in August, 1981 in St. Catharines, and the future hosting of the 1983 Canadian Conference in Ontario. Of great concern was budget, and this predominated throughout the conference in Vineland.

Many faithful and dedicated men have served in our Executive over the years since 1957. For instance, Brother H.P. Penner served as Moderator or Assistant for eleven years, but probably one that deserves special mention is our Conference Treasurer. A resume follows:

JACOB ALEXANDER KUTZ:

(1903 -)

Pictured here is our Conference Treasurer from 1947 to 1978, a total of 31 years.

Brother Kutz accepted Christ as his Personal Saviour in 1923 in Russia. There he had been educated in the Handelsschule in Gnadenfeld and the Kommerzschule in Halbstadt.



In 1926 he emigrated to Vineland, later moved to Kitchener and taught Sunday School for over 40 years. This he did in addition to his treasury work. His lively sense of humour lightened many a conference hour. He still serves today as Treasurer of the Board of Church Extension.

A HISTORICAL SUMMARY

OF OUR

ONTARIO CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE,

1957-1982:

YEAR	PLACE	MODERATOR	ASS'T. MODERATOR	SECRETARY	TREASURER
1957-58	Kitchener	I.H. Tiessen	H.P. Penner	G. Friesen	J.A. Kutz
1958-59	St. Catharines	H.P. Penner	J.G. Baerg	G. Friesen	J.A. Kutz
1959-60	Pt. Rowan	H.P. Penner	J.G. Baerg	G. Friesen	J.A. Kutz
1960-61	Vineland	H.P. Penner	D.D. Derksen	G. Friesen	J.A. Kutz
1961-62	Kitchener	J.G. Baerg	H.P. Penner	G. Friesen	J.A. Kutz
1962-63	Leamington	J.G. Baerg	H.P. Penner	P.J. Dick	J.A. Kutz
1963-64	Pt. Rowan	H.P. Penner	W. Schmidt	P.J. Dick	J.A. Kutz
1964-65	St. Catharines	J.G. Baerg	J.M. Schmidt	P.J. Dick	J.A. Kutz
1965-66	Vineland	F.C. Peters	H.P. Penner	P.J. Dick	J.A. Kutz
1966-67	Vineland	J.G. Baerg	J.M. Schmidt	P.J. Dick	J.A. Kutz
1967-68	Fairview	J.G. Baerg	H.P. Penner	P.J. Dick	J.A. Kutz
1968-69	Kitchener	H.P. Penner	H. Goosen	V. Loewen	J.A. Kutz
1969-70	Leamington	H.P. Penner	H. Goosen	V. Loewen	J.A. Kutz
1970-71	Scott St.	H. Goosen	J. Neufeld	V. Loewen	J.A. Kutz
1971-72	Vineland	H. Goosen	J. Neufeld	V. Loewen	J.A. Kutz
1972-73	Pt. Rowan	H. Goosen	J. Neufeld	D.D. Wiens	J.A. Kutz
1973-74	Virgil	R. Bartel	H. Goosen	D.D. Wiens	J.A. Kutz
1974-75	Fairview	R. Bartel	J.G. Baerg	D.D. Wiens	J.A. Kutz
1975-76	Grantham	R. Bartel	I. Block	H. Pauls	J.A. Kutz
1976-77	Kitchener	I. Block	J. Froese	H. Pauls	J.A. Kutz
1977-78	Leamington	I. Block	J. Froese	P.J. Dick	J.A. Kutz
1978-79	Orchard Park	I. Block	R. Bartel	H. Pauls	E. Friesen
1979-80	Pt. Rowan	R. Bartel	J. Froese	H. Pauls	E. Friesen
1980-81	Scott St.	R. Bartel	J. Froese	H. Pauls	E. Friesen
1981-82	Eden	R. Bartel	G. Wichert	H. Pauls	E. Friesen

SUPPORTING COMMITTEES:

The following committees serve independently yet generally under the jurisdiction of the Conference Executive: they are not "Boards", but act in a specific area to support the work of the Executive.

a) AUDITING COMMITTEE:

At the beginning of the last quarter century the general functions of auditing were performed by a "Revisionskomitee", and this committee in turn was a part of the "Direktorium". The latter functioned much like a steering committee in practical, money matters (Board of Trustees). By the mid-sixties however, a new auditing committee was formed. This committee, like the old "Revisionskomitee", was a working committee. Its duties were to actually, themselves, audit the various conference treasuries, and report their findings to the annual conference. At first there were only three members, but by the late seventies, as the work of the conference grew, this was increased to five members.

Most of the people serving in this area were familiar with money matters, and included particularly accountants, especially in later years. For fear of missing names we shall mention only the members of the 1957 Committee and the 1982 one. In 1957 Jacob Kaethler and Jacob Reimer are listed, while in 1982 Phil Baese, Henry Durksen, and George Enns served on the Auditing Committee.

It should be mentioned here, that in the last two years the nature of the committee has changed again. In 1981 the conference after lengthy debate made it possible for the committee to "oversee or administer" the audit. As a result it has again been reduced to three persons. Much of the work in recent years has been performed by "Crawford, Smith, and Swallow", a local St. Catharines accounting firm.

b) CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE:



Ed Boldt Archie Heide John Janzen

When the original Constitution and Charter of our Conference was written and accepted in 1932, changes and amendments were as a rule instigated through the initiative of the Conference executive or the Board of Reference and Counsel (Board of Social and Spiritual Concerns today). However, in the past twenty-five years major changes and additions have been made largely through the work of a Constitution Committee.

The first regular Constitution Committee was organized in 1961 to draft a "Revised Ontario M.B. Conference Constitution" as well as "Proposed By-laws". The committee elected to carry out this task included H.H. Voth, Chairman, Abram Block, H.H. Dueck, G.G. Friesen, and C.J. Rempel. Included in the revised Constitution was the new functioning of this committee. In 1963 a permanent committee was organized.

From now on all constitutional matters, the interpretation and amending would be in the hands of this committee. This meant that any new constitutional matters, coming from any conference board, Committee, or individual member, must first go to the Constitution Committee for examination and drafting. The Constitution Committee would then formulate these as Notices of Motion for Amendment, send them to the churches for approval by membership vote, and announce the results for ratification if approved by the churches at the following Conference session. No Board, Committee, or individual member could now prepare or recommend amendments to the Conference.

As one looks over the records of the work of the Committee over the past twenty-five years, the predominant feature is extension, streamlining, and clarification of the growing work of our Conference. The most recent example of this is the formation of a new Board of Camping Ministries as the work of the old Camp Committee of the Board of Christian Education expanded.

Prominent members of this Committee over the years include H.H. Voth, C.J. Rempel, H.H. Dueck, David Warkentin, and Brother Archie Heide. The Committee in our Jubilee Year and for the past four years which also brought out the 1981 Revised Edition of our Constitution consisted of Brother Archie Heide, Chairman, Ed Boldt, and John Janzen.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

No formal committee to carry out this function of the Conference existed until 1969. Prior to this, nominations were made from the floor and the elections carried out under the direction of the Conference Moderator, Secretary, and a Ballot Committee.

However, in 1968 the Board of Reference and Counsel and the Constitution Committee were instructed to organize a formal "Nominating Committee". The proposal was made in order to make proper preparations for a slate of candidates for the various Conference positions. This would enable members of all the churches to become involved in nominating, and give ample time to think about and contact suitable candidates. The first committee formed was that in 1970 and included Brother Jake Wichert, Chairman, Walter Wichert, Nick Klassen, Frank Bartel, and Jake Dueck.

Since that time a good variety of members have worked efficiently and produced a much more representative selection of candidates from the constituency. In 1982 the committee was chaired by Brother Jake Loewen, (Kitchener), and also included Peter Bartel, Peter Derksen, Jake Janzen, and Ferdinand Klassen.

BETHESDA HOME FOR THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED:

Historically one might say that Bethesda is the first and pioneer project of our people in Ontario. Fifty years ago, in 1932, when our Ontario Conference was organized, Brother and Sister Henry Wiebe took in their first "patient" in their own home in Stratford, Ontario. Five years later they moved to Camden, near Vineland, and there on an original tract of land consisting of seventy-five acres they began the work that has blossomed into one large and successful ministry that it is today.

Although Bethesda is not under the administration of our Ontario Conference any more (in 1947 it was taken over by our Canadian Conference and is now administered under its Board of Management), it is interesting to note that there is a good possibility that it might return to us again soon. At our Ontario Conference session in February, 1982, suitably in Vineland, the Conference decided to instruct our Board of Trustees to begin discussions with the Canadian Board of Management with a view to discovering the process of returning Bethesda to our own provincial conference's administration. This is due to the Canadian Conference's prompting, which maintains that realistically, since the work is now totally financed by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, the administration should come from here.

Brother Walter Janzen, for many years a Board member for Bethesda, tells the history and present work of Bethesda as he told it to the 1981 Canadian Conference in Saskatoon, and the Ontario Conference of 1982 in Vineland.



Reverend and Mrs. Henry P. Wiebe were the founders of the Bethesda institution, and served as the house parents from 1932 to 1951.

At the Memorial Service and Communion during our "Jubilee Conference" in 1981 at Eden Christian College, the name of Brother Henry Wiebe was read by Brother Herman Kroeker, who led the service, as one of our deceased leaders in Ontario. "God appreciates people, and we represent His most precious possession. Therefore, in His sight, the death of His sights is precious".

BETHESDA - by Walter Janzen:

A fair number of years have passed since "Bethesda" has officially been reported at any of the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches Conventions. For this generation to fully appreciate "Bethesda" we should really look back to its beginnings — review them in detail. We should consider that venture of faith, the difficulties and joys of success, the struggles and victories of those early years. Since our time and space is somewhat limited, let us highlight just a few facts.

Brother Henry P. Wiebe, deceased, and his wife Maria, now resident in Tabor Manor, ventured out in faith in their desire to serve God in serving those of our Brotherhood who were "crippled" with mental illness. This dates back to 1937 when recent immigrants who began to suffer mental illness were threatened with deportation. In 1945, the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches acquired ownership of Bethesda Home and in 1947 the Canadian Conference purchased the farm with its facilities. The main emphasis of service was to the mentally ill and continued thus until 1969, even though 28 of the residents were "Adult Mentally Retarded" at that time. Those first 30 years witnessed many changes and expansions in plant facilities, increase in resident and staff population as well as program.

Following the Mental Health Act of 1967, the psychiatric services to the mentally ill experienced a very definite, yet almost unnoticeable phasing out. At Ministry request (Ministry of Community and Social Services), retarded adults were admitted in place of mentally ill people. The mentally ill residents at Bethesda at that time were privileged



The photo shows the Bethesda institution when it was taken over by the Ontario M.B. Conference in 1945.

to remain for continued care and treatment. Under the Developmental Services Act of 1974, Bethesda was classified as a Schedule II Facility for the care and training of mentally retarded adults. The operational costs are funded entirely by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, while approved capital expansions are shared on a ⅓ - ⅔ basis, with Bethesda assuming the ⅓ costs.

The original motto, "And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not", Galations 6:9, is as important and applicable today as ever before.

At present there are 115 residents living at Bethesda. They are all adults. Their average age is 40 years, the youngest being only 17 years old. Three residents are blind and 36 have epilepsy.

The residents come to us from a variety of religious and church backgrounds: Mennonite Brethren, Roman Catholic, United Church, Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, United Mennonite, Lutheran, Mennonite, Old Mennonite, Greek Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Salvation Army, Pentecostal, Church of God, Christian Reformed, Gospel Hall, Calvary, Christian Science. Nine have no church background and a few others have uncertain information.

Geographically they come to us from a variety of places, some 36 different addresses (town or city): Ancaster, Beamsville, Brantford, Breslau, Burlington, Caledonia, Cambridge, Campden, Cayuga, Fort Erie, Grimsby, Hamilton, Islington, Kitchener, Leamington, Mississauga, Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niverville, Port Colborne, Pt. Lampton, Port Robinson, Preston, St. Catharines, Thorold, Three Hills, Trenton, Vineland, Virgil, Wainfleet, Waterford, Waterloo, Welland, Willowdale, Winnipeg, York and possibly some other places by now.

The admission of these residents was by virtue of the following very general reasons:

Severely retarded
Moderately retarded
Mildly retarded
Profoundly retarded
Psychosis
Borderline retarded

The reasons for their continued care and training could be stated in very general terms as follows:

Developmental training
Socially unacceptable behaviour
Medical or nursing care
Vocational training

The single word most descriptive and very often used with reference to the main thrust of our present services is "developmental". Very simply, the intent of all programming is to be instrumental in helping each resident to develop the greatest spiritual, physical, mental, social and whatever else can be helpful for experiencing a meaningful and satisfying life. At Bethesda a variety of programs and activities are expected to do just that for each and every resident.

In very general terms they are as follows:

1. **Chaplaincy Program**
 The basic spiritual needs of residents are ministered to through services (Sunday and during the week), group and personal counselling.

2. **Vocational Training Program**
 This involves contract work from such places as the Ministry of Health, Thompson Products, Otis Elevator Company etc.

3. **Residential Life Program**
 This involves learning the very basic daily living skills such as dressing, washing, toileting habits, socialization, acceptable and pleasant behavior etc.

4. **Individual Programs**
 This involves special resident participation in the Laundry, Kitchen and Housekeeping Departments, as well as gardening and grounds maintenance.

5. **Developmental Activity**
 (Involving approximately 40% of the lower functioning residents). This teaches very basic skills, i.e. sensory and pre-vocational training.

6. **Academic Program**
 This includes:
 - Academic courses - very basic
 - Pool program
 - Interest courses - woodworking, ceramics, etc.
 - Music program - singing, rhythm, etc.
 - Blissymbolics

7. **Recreation**
 Like all other programs, this could also be dealt with in 2-4 short sub-topics. Recreation is a very important aspect of everyday living, and seems to have greater importance in today's society than in that of our forefathers. Similarly, recreation is also important in the lifestyle of our residents and many, in fact most of the aspects of recreational activities must be learned by them.

- Pool Program - The adapted aquatic program is under the supervision of a person qualified in water programs for the handicapped. To overcome fear of the water is not easy, and then to advance through the various stages of expertise in the swimming program can become major challenges and achievements.

- Gym - The gym is being used for a variety of programs. Floor hockey, badminton, basketball, volleyball, trampoline, are useful in building coordination of motor skills, good sportsmanlike behavior and creating enjoyable activity. Other exercises develop general coordination, balance, eye-hand and eye-foot coordination and generally improve the gross motor skills.

- Community sports of ice skating and bowling are also a regular part of recreation for many.

- The outdoors offer great opportunity in winter sports, in cross country skiing and snow shoeing. Summer days and evenings are good for cycling. A fair number of residents develop from the use of exercise bicycles through 3 wheelers to the regular 2 wheeler bicycle. For you and me this may be a very simple accomplishment, but a major achievement for at least many of our residents. We all — maybe with a few exceptions — enjoy special outings. This is normal to most people and the residents at Bethesda enjoy very much the trips to watch Junior A hockey or a special Blue Jay game; a good time at Marine Land, or take in the sights at the zoo or spend some time at the Toronto City Hall — all very exciting but also learning experiences. And then there are times for just relaxing in their own Bethesda Recreational Park with its pavilion, shuffleboard, swings etc. — a donation from the

staff to them. We may not forget their camping excursions. Several times during the past few years fair groups have been away to camp for a week or more at a time — up to as much as 3½ weeks per summer. Real good times to grow together! Talk to them — to the staff too — about these times.

We are proud of our staff. They are doing a most commendable job at working with these residents. Each one's contribution is vital and important in the life of each resident.

At the end of 1981 the Bethesda Board included Walter Janzen (Beamsville), Chairman, Helmut Koop, Leonard Martens, Elmer Neufeld, and Lora Warkentin. The Administrator was Don Boese, and the Chaplain was Walter Janzen (son of H.H. Janzen).

THE BOARD OF CHURCH EXTENSION: (Home Missions)

"..... to look for and investigate opportunities for the establishment of mission fellowships" - so reads the mandate of this Board, once called "The Home Missions Boards". In 1970, however, the re-naming of the Board to "Church Extension" indicated a subtle change. Now the Conference through its Board together with the individual churches in a spirit of working together was to work in this area. Moreover, the work was to be in the direction of establishing new churches - a departure from the "pure" missions concept. The mandate of the Board thus is now to not only evangelize in areas of the province where there is a need, but also to establish, as soon as is feasible, independent churches that will assume full responsibility for a witness in their area.

An illustration of this shift can be seen in the area of Vacation Bible School activities in the province. At one time this Board initiated and carried on V.B.S. activities with a view to evangelizing children in areas outside of the regular churches influence. It was hoped that thereby, in the future, permanent outreach fellowships in these places could be established, but basically it was to evangelize children. This method in the 70's was phased out, and only the individual churches who could nurture the children and their families continued in this work. The new method of the Board was to establish "cell" churches, and to assist these cells to multiply on their own as soon as possible.

Further, where once the strategy was to begin with a cell of "M.B.'s" as a core group to assist the local worker brought in by the Board, it was felt that often the ethnic traditions of M.B.'s acted as a barrier to community identification. Thus the new approach would be to send in a worker basically alone into a needy area, and to develop a grass-roots fellowship in his area. Examples of this approach are the work in Spragge and Niagara Falls.

Historical Synopsis:

Reaching back to our beginnings in this work we see the Conference in 1945 establishing a committee of four under the chairmanship of Brother H.H. Voth to begin the work. Teachers were encouraged to move into non-M.B. areas and teach Religious Education in their schools, as well as V.B.S. in the summers. By 1948 a "Field Director" was engaged, Brother Peter Esau, who also carried on "col-portage" activities. In 1951 the first permanent work was begun in the Coldwater area, in Ontario's beautiful Muskoka area. Here the Henry Dicks, John Epps, Herman Kroekers, and Peter Klassens laboured until an independent church developed.

By 1955 the work was extended into the Hamilton - Stoney Creek area, where the John Ungers, David Nickels, John Reimers, Herman Kroekers, Norman Neufelds, and Henry Esaus have served until the present time.

THE LAST 25 YEARS:

Launching out in the new quarter-century of our conference's history was the Home Missions Committee chaired by Brother Henry Penner, assisted by Ernie Dick, Virgil, J.J. Toews, Kitchener, P.J. Rempel, Kitchener, and Ed Wiebe, Vineland, in 1957. Already a work had begun in the Toronto area called "The Willowdale Christian Fellowship Chapel" under the leadership of the H.H. Voths. The work needed strengthening, and a new challenge for outreach in Ontario's largest urban centre was accepted.

It should be mentioned at this point that in the same year also, the newly organized "Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel" or Niagara M.B. Church was accepted into the Conference, an outgrowth of the vision of the Virgil church for outreach in their own area. This work was located in the general Niagara-on-the-Lake area.

For the next several years consolidation of the work through V.B.S. work, especially in the Home Missions areas, radio work and Religious Instruction in the local schools of the same areas, was emphasized. Often this was spearheaded by a V.B.S. "Field Director", a part-time position under the Home Missions Committee, and including such men as John Unger, John Boldt, and Jacob Neufeld. Also helping along and doing commendable work in the area of V.B.S. "Follow-up" was Sister Johanna Dyck assisted by her husband George and Olga Enns, all of Kitchener.

But by the mid-Sixties a new impetus for extension in Home Missions activities was felt as the Board investigated, according to its mandate, new areas of outreach. Places such as Thorold, Ottawa, and Brampton, among others were investigated. Arising out of this, and continuing through to the present day, we see the development of a series of new churches, seven of which today are still directly or indirectly related to our Board of Church Extension.

It should be noted here that three of these churches have written their own histories, Brampton, Evergreen Heights, and Komoka; the rest will be briefly summarized in this account. All will be described in chronological order. Today the Hampshire church is independent, and its history will be recounted in the regular church histories later in this book.

A HISTORY OF OUR "EXTENSION" CHURCHES - 1957-82

TORONTO:

As already indicated, the Toronto work began under the leadership of Brother H.H. Voth in 1957 and soon organized under the name "Willowdale Christian Fellowship Chapel". Part of the outreach was to include students studying in Toronto. When Brother Voth's personal studies there were concluded, the Home Missions Committee called Herbert and Margaret Swartz of Kitchener who assumed the leadership on August 1, 1959. In order to pursue a more vigorous community outreach the group moved to the Baycrest Avenue Public School, adjacent to a new Metropolitan Housing Project, The Lawrence Heights Development. A witness to the latter has been carried on to the present day.

In 1960, with growing excitement and enthusiasm, plans began for a permanent meeting place. In 1961 a building committee was formed, a lot purchased on 272 Ranee Avenue for $20,000 and plans for raising additional money were approved. By October 2, 1962 excavation was begun, and on February 3, 1963 meetings were begun.

With great regret the church saw the Swartzes leave for an M.C.C. assignment in Jordan in 1963 but welcomed the Peter Penners (Vineland) to replace them. Formal organization and development continued and a faithful community witness was encouraging.

By 1966 the Isaac Tiessens were active in the work and emphasis was placed upon community outreach, particularly again in the Lawrence Heights Project. In 1972 the church had achieved financial independence, the Isaac Tiessens had departed and the Allan Guenthers (Brother Guenther was studying in Toronto at the time) led the work on a part-time basis.

The church continued as an independent work under the Isaac Tiessens and Ron Friesens until 1978, when on September 1 a new work was begun in Brampton-Bramalea out of members of the Toronto church. On May 28, 1978 the remaining members had requested to once more become a Home Missions church due to the reduced membership and to support a community couple working in the Lawrence Heights project in co-operation with M.C.C. The preceding dates are "official" ones.

The new name of the work was now Yorkdale Community Church of the Mennonite Brethren, and continues as such to the present day. In 1980 the Ron Friesens left and were replaced temporarily by the Peter Brauns who were serving as Christian Service Workers at the time. This was a difficult time for the small church and much heart searching in regard to the future took place in consultation also with the Board of Church Extension. New life emerged as the Alan Epps took over the work on September 1, 1980. The area is very "multicultural" and an Italian group has also been using the church in recent times part-time.

Faithful workers and supporters in the church over the years include the David Warkentins, Rudy Dueckmans, Hannu Aaltus, Erica Janzen, Ed Janzens, Ben Brauns, and many others. God will continue to bless the work as faithful people serve Him.

SPRAGGE: (Elliot Lake)

Brother John Klassen, a Mathematics teacher in Blind River, first drew attention to a work in the North in the Elliot Lake area. Our work began with V.B.S. and surveying the field. At first it was thought that Elliot Lake should be the focus, but since the city was in a rapid decline at the time, and a "Bethesda Fellowship" group was losing its leader in Spragge, 18 miles to the south, it was decided to move the work there. Bruno and Helen Toews were approached to take over the work, and after renting for a short time in Elliot Lake, moved to Elliot Lake. They had first arrived in 1967.

Soon plans were made to build, and Providentially, the Lord supplied two old "dormitories" originally used by workers close by, and these formed the core of the new Chapel. Bruno worked very hard at the location, and often the effort was exhausting. Meanwhile other efforts in the community were made, work among some of the local Indians was pursued, and the work began to grow.

Building a successful church in the North proved to be very challenging, and all of our workers have experienced both joys and sorrows as they took up the challenge. The pioneer work of Bruno and Helen Toews will always be deeply appreciated by all those whom they served and who were aware of the many problems of getting a work started. When they left in April, 1973, the Willy Baergs, former missionaries in Africa took over the work. Reaping from the previous period, a number of baptisms and some consolidation of the work characterized their stay.

In the Spring of 1975, due to health problems, the Baergs left Spragge to take up a new outreach mission in Niagara Falls and Archie and Erna Jantzen arrived from Northern Manitoba to replace them. They have served at Spragge until the present time. Good progress has been made, and a number of baptisms, V.B.S. work, youth work, community outreach and generally serving the community. A highlight in 1978 was the ordination of the pastor, a



Archie and Erna Jantzen & Family

new experience for the people there. Also, workers from the South, during construction periods, choirs, schools, and many other contacts have always been much appreciated.

Faithful workers from the congregation over the years have served the church well - the John Klassens, the Greens, the Augstens, the Johnsons, the Hurtubises, and the Bookers - and many more. They are the "beautiful feet that carry good news" in Ontario's beautiful Northland!

MOUNTVIEW M.B. CHURCH:
(Hamilton, Stoney Creek)

In 1957 work in this area proceeded under the leadership of Brother John Unger. It consisted basically of three areas - Sunday School, V.B.S. and Religious Instruction in the elementary schools in Hamilton - Stoney Creek. Much assistance came from the Vineland church as well as others. A trailer park between Stoney Creek and Hamilton and a nearby elementary school were a particular focus of attention. John and Mary Unger lived in rented quarters on Wexford Avenue, fairly close by.

By 1958 plans for Hamilton were changing and it was felt an urban downtown church was the great need. A building committee was formed and by February 22, 1959 a new "chapel" was dedicated on Osborne Avenue. After years of pioneer work the John Ungers left to pursue further studies and David and Rosie Nickel assumed the work in August, 1961. In the previous month of December a formal organization of The Hamilton M.B. Mission Church had taken place. After a brief term of service the David Nickels left and the John Reimers took over the work in 1962.

By 1964 the property on Osborne was becoming an impractical area of service due to plans by the city of Hamilton to run a four-lane street through the district. Plans were instituted for a re-location and the Stoney Creek area, due to new building and good connections with the Niagara District was chosen. A lot on the old #8 Highway in Stoney Creek was purchased, assistance to the John Reimers to purchase a home in the area was given, and under the enthusiastic leadership of Brother Reimer a new church was soon completed under the new name "Mountview".

Those were heart-warming days, and with a joyous heart the young congregation on October 2, 1967 celebrated the dedication of their beautiful and spacious new sanctuary. The members worked hard in all areas, many regularly transporting children to Sunday School, V.B.S., and other services. In the summer of 1967 the John Reimers left Stoney Creek for Steinbach, Manitoba. The Board of Church Extension then requested that the Herman Kroekers take over their work in Stoney Creek while the Peter Klassens took over Hampshire.

Radio work, Religious Instruction in the schools, community outreach - these were the emphases in the "Kroeker years" and the work continued. In the summer of 1972, however, Herman and Irene left to take over the pastorate at the Orchard Park M.B. Church and Norman and Irene Neufeld arrived from the United States to replace them. Several new types of reach-out were attempted in the surrounding community, but continuing moving in and out of a rather mobile church family made growth difficult. In 1979, after seven years of devoted service, the congregation took a sad farewell of the Neufelds as they took up a new work at The Parliament Community Church in Regina, Saskatchewan.

In March 1980, Henry and Erika Esau arrived from British Columbia to take up the work after Jack Rogalsky and a church group had maintained the work temporarily. Today they continue on with a membership of 40 and with tremendous opportunities in a large urban, unreached area.

THE KOMOKA COMMUNITY CHURCH:
Mennonite Brethren. (Lambeth, London)
By Herman Kroeker



The Rudy Janzen's Home: Lambeth, 1970



V.B.S. Staff 1971



The New Komoka Church - Built 1980



Rev. and Mrs. Isaac Tiessen
Pastor and Moderator: 1972-1974



Herman and Irene Kroeker 1979-

In the last week of August, 1970, the Rudy Janzens moved from B.C. to Lambeth, Ontario to begin witnessing in the West London area and explore possibilities of an M.B. outreach, while Rudy Janzen took up duties as Home Missions Director for the Ontario M.B. Conference. Survey leads through Harold Penner's visitation in Lambeth were followed up and soon some prospective contacts for closer fellowship were nurtured. The Janzens made contacts with various Christian families in the greater London, Komoka, Strathroy and Ailsa Craig area, and tried to initiate informal fellowship meetings in their home on Southland Drive in Lambeth.

Vacation Bible Schools were started at the Lambeth M.B. McEachern School, the Southwest London Public School and the Komoka "Parkview" Public School.

By October, 1971 several families showed interest in meeting Sunday evening with a youth group started by the initiative of their teenage children, David and Kathie. A Wednesday morning ladies Bible study was begun by Erica Janzen, with Rudy Janzen as discussion leader. On Nov. 21, 1971 a formal decision was made to begin a regular Sunday evening service in the Janzen home. Thirty five adults and children were present. Early in 1972 a Dial-a-Thought telephone counseling ministry began in the greater London area. This was subsidized by a local business man. The chaplaincy at the University of Western Ontario was also promoted at this time. By the end of 1972 a substantial group was gathering regularly in various larger homes, with a Midweek Bible Study.

With the help of the M.B. Conference Board of Church extension the group organized as an official Mission Church in the fall of 1972. The charter list was signed by 24 interested adults in the residence of Helmut Buxbaum. In 1973 application was made to the Ontario Conference to recognize this fellowship as a Conference subsidized Mission Church. The same year it was recognized and welcomed into the Canadian Conference at Three Hills.

Due to the busy schedule of Rudy Janzen as Home Missions director and Chaplain to a Nursing home, Rev. Isaac Tiessen was asked to serve as pastor of this Lambeth M.B. Community Church. As the group grew in number the services were transferred to the Helmut Buxbaum home, and then to the Parkview School in Komoka. Br. I. Tiessen served as part-time pastor until Aug. 30, 1974.

After resigning from directing Home Missions in Ontario Rudy Janzen served as full time pastor from Sept. 1, 1974 until June 1, 1978. Br. I. Tiessen served as moderator during this time. There were 31 members.

The church sponsored a Day Care Centre in the local United Church. A German Radio program by Br. I. Tiessen was aired through a St. Thomas station.

By 1975 the congregation was comprised of 60% Dutch-German and 40% English background, and by 1978 almost 75% non-Mennonite participants. During the years 1975 to 1978 the congregation functioned as an independent self supporting church. Then by request the church became a Mission Church subsidized by the Ontario Conference. In the month of July Pastor Herman Kroeker accepted a call to become the full time worker to live and to work in the town of Komoka. This was 1979. On June the 8th, 1980 we had our sod-turning service, and a busy summer building a new church. On Nov. 23rd 1980 we had our first service in the new church. The day of dedication took place Dec. 28, 1980. We thank the Lord for what He is doing. Today we have 24 baptized believers and about 25 adherents who worship with us, with about 36 children in Sunday School. Many visitors come to worship with us.

Please join us in praising HIM for all that He saw fit to do.

THE BRAMPTON MENNONITE CHURCH - 1978-1981:



K.J. Weinberger: Pastor 1979-80

The Brampton Mennonite Church was founded by a number of the members of the Toronto Mennonite Brethren Church (Yorkdale) who lived primarily in Brampton and Georgetown and met for a weekly Bible Study class in their homes. The concept of a "West-End" church had been discussed many times during the early 1970's but didn't reach fruition until the fall of 1978. The congregation met for its formal Worship Service on September 10, 1978 at the Centennial Recreation Center in Brampton. The following list of keen supporters pioneered these early days of decision making.

Ed, Agnes, Libby Janzen
Ben, Mary, Karen & Janice Braun
Rudy, Frieda & LeeAnn Dueckman
Neil, Chris, Doug & Andrew Isaack
Ed, Karen & Matthew Bergey
Ed, Sharon, Shauna & Duane Heide
Bill & Elvera Reimer
Norm & Reta Siemans
Bob, Linda, Christopher & Suzanne Bergey

The process of church growth has several dimensions for the Brampton Mennonite Church. The main areas of growth for BMC are personal spiritual growth, interpersonal growth within the congregation and growth in total membership. Through the weekly Bible Study classes, Worship services, and social events, we have experienced significant personal spiritual growth and a stronger feeling of community within the group. The total membership growth has been hampered by the itinerant nature of the congregation. In spite of the relocation of three of the founding eight families, an overall increase to twelve families has been witnessed to date. We pray for continued growth in all areas.



Brampton Centennial Recreation Centre:
Meeting Place of
The Brampton Mennonite Church

Due to the small numbers involved, participation in the organizational life of the church has been maintained at 100%. Strong leadership has been provided through the past and present moderators E. Janzen (79, 80) and R. Dueckman (80, 81). K.J. Weinburger accepted the call to be our pastor in October 1979 and remained with BMC until July 1980. During the periods when a pastor has not been ministering to us, E. Bergey - Minister of worship and fellowship has scheduled a number of guest speakers to fulfill the Sunday Worship Service with the remaining pastoral duties being spread amongst the membership.

The major accomplishment of the church over the last 2½ years was the Refugee Assistance Project carried out from February 1979 to July 1981. When the plight of the Vietnamese refugees was identified by MCC in early 1979, the BMC immediately responded and after investigation and discussion decided to sponsor a refugee family. On July 13, 1979, we met Mr. and Mrs. Vuong Pham and their six children at Toronto International Airport. A refugee support committee comprised of E. Janzen, E. Bergey, E. Heide and R. Bergey arranged for the rental of a three-bedroom apartment on Dundas Street West in Toronto. Many donations of household effects and money were received from other citizens in support of the refugee program. In addition to this commitment, BMC purchased a house on Poucher Street in Toronto for use as temporary lodging facility for refugees sponsored by other groups.

The Phams became self sufficient within eight months at which time an additional three people were sponsored. The last three arrived in July and August 1980.

The question of a church building has been raised on several occasions, however, due to the current membership size and the excellent facilities cur-

rently available on a rental basis, no long range plans have been made at this time.

In 1981 a decision to ask The Board of Church Extension to become a full Home Mission's Church was acted upon, accepted by the Conference, and the Art Willms family from Leamington came to assume a leadership role. The locale of meeting has been changed to Bramalea, a great new field of witness, and the work is progressing to His glory!

THE NIAGARA FALLS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH:

In 1975, The Board of Church Extension, after extensive surveying, placed the Willy Baergs formerly of Spragge in the work at Niagara Falls. The Martha Cullimore Elementary School was utilized for three months, and then the work shifted to the basement of the home of the Willy Baergs. Outreach through a telephone, prison, and community outreach began and has continued to the present day. Answering a call to return for a time to Africa, the Baergs left in Decemeber, 1977, and were replaced by the Dick Hills in the summer of 1978. Area speakers, including Alfred Friesen, Jacob Pankratz, and others helped to fill in during the interim.

Upon the Hills' arrival the work moved ahead. The Church grew, and soon building plans appeared for a permanent meeting place. In 1978 a lot was purchased, and on October 28, 1979 at 2:30 in the afternoon the new edifice was dedicated to God and his people in the Niagara Falls area. From a membership of 21 when the work was completed to to-day the membership has grown to 41. Bible study groups, Family Nights, and many other features led to a vigorous growth. Thus it was with real regret that the church bade farewell to the Hills in 1981 as they left for distant Saskatchewan.

The Board was pleased to be able, however, to announce an able replacement in Brother Henry Wiebe, The Board Field Director, at the 1982 Conference in Vineland. It is the hope and prayer of each member that the Lord will bless His work in this vital area of Ontario!

A FINAL SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE BOARD OF CHURCH EXTENSION:

Omitted in the previous accounts have been a number of items. Leadership in the general field of Home Missions has been a vital factor. Always there was over the years felt the need for a full-time Field Director. At times it was possible, at times not.

Beginning in 1957 some of the work was done part-time by a V.B.S. Director. Thus Brother John Unger served in this capacity for a number of years and was replaced in that capacity in 1962 by Brother John Boldt, also teaching at the Ontario Bible School in Kitchener at the time. In 1964 Brother Jake Neufeld also began part-time while still serving Niagara Fellowship Chapel and later in Brampton. On September 1, 1970, Brother Rudy Janzen assumed responsibilities for a part-time post also, with added responsibilities in the Lambeth-London area. In 1978, after a gap of three years, Brother Henry Wiebe took over the position, which, again on a part-time basis he holds today.

Finally, there has also been the development of an "Extended Board" which adds an "auxiliary" function in the churches, for a time a "Film and Bible Correspondence Ministry" which had originated with Brother Norman Browett from our Hampshire Church and was carried on in the 1976-77 period by Gary Gosen of Kitchener, and the Workers' Retreats. The latter was usually held every three years and were real highlights for workers and Board members and their wives. Planning, praying, fellowship, and mutual encouragement were gained - at Geneva Park, Eden, Kitchener - a time of great blessing. The 1981-82 Board includes Walter Janzen, Chairman, Arthur Willms, Victor Franz, Peter J. Klassen, Henry Klassen and Brother J. Kutz, Treasurer.

A HISTORY OF THE ONTARIO BOARD OF SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

- BY MARVIN WARKENTIN

The Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns has changed its formal identity over the years. Originally known as the Committee of Reference and Counsel, it was renamed the Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns in 1970. That year was one of reorganization for the Ontario Conference as it aligned its organizational structure with that of the Canadian Conference. Major organizations were renamed "boards" and lesser organizations were designated "committees".

However, the Board's function did not change. The Committee of Reference and Counsel had the task of giving counsel to the Conference in its various spiritual and social activities. The Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns continued with the same task. Indeed, the new name was selected because it more accurately identified the activity of the former Committee of Reference and Counsel.

Some issues have been repeated from time to time

through the years because of their on-going presence. Other matters, rooted in time, were treated at once, never to surface before the Board again.

Guiding the Conference into the establishment of a Senior Citizen's Home was one of the continuing issues. In 1965 the Conference decided to appoint a committee to deal with the matter of an Old Folks Home. By 1969 Tabor Manor took shape and the Committee of Reference and Counsel worked with the Tabor Board on an admission policy for residents.

A one time issue was the 1965 decision of the Conference, with Committee of Reference and Counsel guidance, to use grape juice in communion services rather than wine.

At various times the Committees was involved with the Home Missions work of the Conference. In 1968 it arranged for assistance to the work in the Spragge-Elliot Lake area. In that same year it was also concerned with financial assistance to the smaller churches in the Conference. In 1969 it encouraged local churches to be more involved in the work of Home Missions. The Board continued to be involved in issues raised by the Board of Church Extension when in 1978 it heard a report from the Church Planning Commission. The recommendation was that for the Niagara area where there was considerable pressure on existing Mennonite Brethren facilities to move to dual services in existing facilities rather than beginning another church project and investing in another building.

The Committee has also been involved in the matter of education. In 1969 the Committee worked closely with the Education Committee in the reconstruction at Eden Christian College. By 1978 the big issue had become the Conference budget utilization. The Board was assigned responsibility for determining the scriptural priorities for the church. It prepared a statement of objectives to reflect those scriptural priorities. These objectives were then measured against constituency expectations. When the report was issued in 1979, it noted that the budget was utilized about two-thirds for Eden Christian College. Approximately one-third remained for other Conference activities including the Board of Church Extension. The Board recommended that without a cutback for Eden Christian College there be an increase in the proportion of expenditure for church extension and evangelism. The scriptural rationale given was that evangelism has priority over teaching. The Conference registered strong support for Eden Christian College and increased support for Church Extension.

During the turbulent unrest of the 60's, there was a particular emphasis on the peace witness of our Conference. There had been some displeasure regarding the 1968 Conference statement on draft evaders. The Conference did see fit, however, to continue being supportive of those who, for the sake of Christ, abandoned efforts at attaining international peace through the means of war and came to Canada.

Another peace question raised at this time was the militaristic aspect of the Christian Service Brigade program. This question continued to be discussed and resulted in correspondence with Christian Service Brigade. Particularly at issue was the publication **Venture,** a Christian Service Brigade magazine, which seemed to highlight the glories of military participation. The response from Venture magazine editor, Paul Heidebrecht, cited his support for the peace position and a number of articles from past issues which focussed the peace emphasis.

Over the years, the question of ordination has arisen frequently. 1971 was a watershed year for the study of ordination. That study produced the following conclusions: 1) only those who consider church related employment as their primary function should consider ordination, 2) ordination should only be for the duration of a candidate's ministry, 3) it is better to commission deacons for a term rather than to ordain them, 4) a person once ordained should not automatically be assumed to be a permanent member of the Church Council, 5) ordination is not essential for performing certain functions such as weddings and communion.

The ordination issue surfaced again in 1980. Concern was expressed that a number of Ontario pastors had not yet been ordained. The Board recommended that the churches consider ordination for their pastors if they remained unordained.

Further, the Board became aware of the need for greater liaison among the churches and the Board particularly in regard to the welcoming of new pastors to the Conference. A commission elected by the Board from within its membership was set up to deal with the "placement, orientation and doctrinal position of new pastors." In 1981 the recommendation came to fruition in the form of the Pastoral Care Commission which serves as that liaison link to the churches of the constituency.

The question of membership arose in the early 1970's. There seemed to be some difference between the formal membership of our congregations and functional membership in our congregations. The conclusion was that we should keep our functional membership as closely in line with our formal membership as is possible.

In the 1970's it was observed that there was quite a change in the attitude of our youth. Whereas youth had in the 1960's been critical or indifferent toward the church, now they were more acceptive of Christianity, although this did not always include acceptance of the organized church.

In 1972 the issue of eschatology was raised. Some quarters in our provincial conference were concerned about the eschatology taught at Mennonite Brethren Bible College. After a period of study under the leadership of Victor Adrian, it was concluded that, "..... all members were in basic agreement of the essentials of New Testament eschatology"

A standard translation was recommended for the public reading and memorization within our churches in 1973. The translation recommended was the new American Standard Bible.

In that same year, the question of women was raised. What role should they have in the ministry of the church? The conclusion reached was, "..... women should participate in church activities and may be delegates to the church convention but men have specific responsibility under God to be leaders and responsible teachers in church and conference" In 1974 the question surfaced again, but further discussion of the issue was left to the individual congregations.

Divorce and remarriage has proved to be a difficult issue over a period of years. In 1976 the matter was studied and it continued for the next few years, although no significant conclusions were recorded. The issue of divorce and remarriage continued to be of interest to the Ontario Conference in 1979. Exception was taken to the 1978 Canadian Conference resolution about divorce and remarriage on the grounds that it was not faithful to Biblical conditions. A letter expressing this concern was sent to the Canadian Conference Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns.

Presently the Board is working with its responsibility for the social portion of its mandate. How can it best relate to the social issues raised through the Mennonite Central Committee? Our provincial conference elects six representatives to serve on each of six Mennonite Central Committee sections. These persons have represented our conference to Mennonite Central Committee as individuals and have had no Conference forum to consider the social involvement of these sections. A Social Commission from within the Board to act as a liaison with the six representatives was recently elected by the Board from within its membership to deal with Mennonite Central Committee related social concerns.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



1957 Youth Committee: L. to R. P. Hamm, D. Neumann, H.H. Dueck, J.J. Toews.



1958 Youth Quiz Team: L. to R. H. Jantz, R. Warkentin, E. Neufeld, E. Goertzen.



1957 V.B.S. TEAM: Leamington: extreme left - P. Hamm; centre - N. Kaethler; extreme right - Betty Hamm.



1957 Youth Camp Retreat at Chesley Lake.



1957 music conductors course at Winnipeg; many Ontario conductors.



1957 Virgil delegates to Winnipeg music course: L. to R. M. Kroeker, J. Block, R. Voth, P. Froese, & R. Bartel.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

(Pictures and Content - C. Alfred Friesen)

The present task of this Board is to "co-ordinate all phases of Christian Education within the Conference which are taught in the local churches". This involves Sunday School, Youth, Music, Clubs (Mid-week), and Audio-Visuals.

Basically, this means convening C.E. Conferences and Workshops, evaluating the purpose, scope, and effectiveness of C.E. within the Conference, maintaining an A.V. Library in St. Catharines, and checking the calendar to avoid date conflicts. The executive today includes Alfred Friesen (Chairman), John Wiebe, (Sec'y.), Music, Frieda Wiebe; Sunday School, David Thiessen: Youth, Ed Dyck; Boys' Club, Peter Krause; Girls' Club, Rita Tjart; and Audio-Visual, Grace Klassen (only the heads are listed).

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS:

Until 1963 the work of Christian Education was administered separately under Sunday School, Youth, and Music. In 1957 the Sunday School Committee included A.H. Redekop, Chairman, C. Isaac, and W. Warkentin; the Youth Committee - H.H. Dueck, Chairman, J.J. Toews, and D.H. Neumann; the Music Committee - J.D. Durksen, Chairman, John Goerz, and P.J. Dick.

It should be mentioned here that in 1957 a "Kinderkamp", Children's Camp, had already been in operation for five years under the general supervision of the Sunday School Committee. A separate account at the end of the Christian Education section will deal with the total history of camping.

We will thus commence the basic history of Christian Education under the separate headings of The C.E. Committee, Sunday School, Youth, Music, and Mid-Week. Audio-Visuals will be included within this framework.

The History of the C.E. Committee, 1957 - 82:

By 1963, as indicated above, changes began in this field. To co-ordinate the work better, "joint" meetings of Youth, S.S., and Music began to take place. Thus in 1964 a "Joint Convention" of C.E. took place for the first time in Kitchener in March of that year. Wilmer Kornelson was the Chairman of the joint planning committee. After conferring with the Board of Reference and Counsel in 1965 it was decided to maintain separate committees but to plan alternating conventions, once let us say, Youth, then a joint convention next, and so on.



THE PRESENT BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION - From left, John Wiebe, David Thiessen, "Lou" Friesen, Frieda Wiebe, and Ed Dyck.

Several successful conventions followed, but by 1969 it was decided to dissolve the joint committee and to change the constitution so there was a new C.E. Committee consisting of a Chairman, secretary, and six sub-committees of three members each. In 1970 the new constitution took effect.

By the Mid-sixties Mid-Week Pioneer Girls Clubs and Christian Service Brigade Clubs were in operation in many of our churches. The new Committee, thus, in addition to planning conventions was also much involved in discussing policy matters, for example as they related to the aforementioned clubs. A major concern in these, particularly the Boys Clubs was the matter of

"militarism" since the activities included uniforms and patriotic exercises.

Co-operation with O.S.S.A. conventions was also carried on as well as with our developing C.E. Office in Winnipeg. Then more recent changes were the reduction of one representative for each of the Boys and Girls Clubs work instead of a committee, and the separation of the camping work into a separate Board of Camping Ministry.

An Audio-Visual work had been vigorously carried on by Jake Wiens in Toronto, in addition to supplying many of the churches with S.S. and V.B.S. materials. In 1976, after many years of dedicated and valuable service to our constituency he left for B.C. and Helmut Wiens took over the literature supply while Grace Klassen took over the A-V work in St. Catharines.

The challenge of the 80's is to help the C.E. agencies to relate the eternal principles of God's Word to today's young people. The methods and programs may change - He never changes!

SUNDAY SCHOOL - 1957 - 1982:

A great encouragement at a time when Sunday School enrolment was peaking in our Ontario churches was the "Sunday School Convention". Held for sometimes 2 days at a stretch, they attracted an amazingly high percentage of workers. For instance, in 1962 208 workers attended our Sunday School Convention, very close to the total number of workers in Sunday School in the province.

By 1965 "Joint Conventions" were held, with Youth and Music joining in, and by 1970 full "Christian Education Conventions began to be held.

tional Christian Education Association) took over. "ICL" Conventions have also been very helpful for our workers in recent years, and have been highly regarded.

Finally, help from our Canadian Office of C.E., especially from Wilmer Kornelson and John Unger has been much appreciated. A "New Vision" for the 1980's is the promotion and development of the Adult Departments in our Sunday Schools. Often busing children and reaching children in the community has proven to be a "short term" affair. But, by reaching the adults, the fathers and the mothers for Sunday School, integrating and reaching the whole family can be achieved.

YOUTH: 1957 - 82:

Our conference has always had a warm heart for its Youth, and great efforts, even perhaps out of proportion to their numbers, have been expended to enrich their lives in a spiritual way. The encroachments of the Twentieth Century, "Pop Culture", including the powerful influence of the Media has offered a stern, almost insurmountable challenge to the church.

On a conference level, again, the major thrust until 1967 was the "Youth Conference", usually one or two day affairs with a "Mass Choir", "Special Numbers", and a prominent "Guest Speaker". Bible quizzes did much to enliven these as well, and often adult attendance was very high, showing the interest of the parents and even grandparents.

By 1967, however, changes began to take place. Week-end "Camp-style" conferences took over, at Fairhavens, Circle C Ranch, and Keswick. A splintering into "Young Peoples" and "College & Careers" also took place, starting in the 70's, and somehow these were not as well attended as in previous years.

SOME STATISTICAL COMPARISONS RE SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLMENT:

1957 - Conference Membership - 1,936:	S.S. Enrolment - 1,704 = 88%
1967 - Conference Membership - 2,511:	S.S. Enrolment - 1,904 = 75%
1982 - Conference Membership - 3,442:	S.S. Enrolment - 2,333 = 67.8%

Sunday School materials also changed over the years, but the most commonly used over the long stretch was "Scripture Press", especially in the Junior to Young Peoples Departments. In the early 1960's some "Herald Press" material came into use but found limited acceptance in our churches.

Out of a "Curriculum Study" in the Mid-Sixties by Wilmer Kornelson, then our new Executive-Secretary for C.E. in Canada, came the concept of adapting materials to suit our purposes by writing some of our own material. An example of this was the printing of "The Adult Quarterly", printed by our conference but adapted to Scripture Press materials. Today still approximately 70% of our churches use "Scripture Press" materials, although some interest has been shown in the new "Foundation Series" of "Herald Press", in which the Canadian Conference is a "Co-operative User".

Other activities of the S.S. Committee have been supporting Teacher Training Courses such as "ETTA" in the 1950's and the "STP" in the 1960's. Co-operation with the "OSSA" was encouraged from 1963 to 1973, after which the new I.C.E.A. (Interna-

Of great encouragement, however, have been the "National Youth Conferences", beginning with "Banff 71". Over 80 young people attended that rally from all parts of Ontario, joining with hundreds of other of our M.B. Youth from across Canada. The spiritual impact was great, and the spiritual repercussions enriched the churches. Since then Banff 74, 77, and 80 have taken place, all with fine results.

A variety of other helpful activities has been spearheaded by the provincial committees - "Deeper Life" meetings, attendance at "Urbana Missionary Conferences", bursaries for needy young people attending Eden and our Bible Schools, distribution of the "Youth Worker" publication, to 1958, and recently a Youth Music Weekend under the leadership of Jake Willms from Kitchener.

Our provincial youth work has also been enhanced by the helpful input from our Canadian Office in

Winnipeg, and the recent "Youth Incites" by Ron Penner, the Associate-Executive Secretary, has been instrumental in helping plan successful youth meetings.

MUSIC: 1957 - 82:

Great efforts have been put forward in this precious heritage of our people by many faithful music leaders in our province over the past 25 years. No better example could be quoted than the recent three hour production of "The Festival of Praise" at the 1981 "Songfest" for our "Jubilee Year". Under the capable leadership of the Music Committee, particularly Frieda Wiebe of St. Catharines, a magnificant program of Music, Drama, Art & Photography Displays was presented. A Historical Pageant entitled "When your Children Shall Ask" beautifully captured the history and spirit of our conference over the last 50 years in music, dramatic vignettes, and narration. Choral singing led by Victor Martens, instrumental groups, and congregational singing added to this wonderful occasion - a great day of celebration at Eden on April 26, 1981. Two full performances were packed out!

The following occasions give one a taste of the great work accomplished over the years:

- 1957 - Music Courses in the churches with John Thiessen and John Goerz - choir exchanges were encouraged.
- 1961 - "Saengerfest" for all choirs and a new booklet of hymns for special occasions was planned.
- 1963 - Choir Conductors' Conference or Course with Victor Martens
- 1965 - Seminar for Choir Leaders and singers at the C.E. Conference with David Falk.
- 1967 - 2 music festivals - Mixed Choirs in October: Male Choirs in March.
- 1969 - Music workshops in the churches with George Wiebe (CMBC)
- 1970 - "Saengerfest" rehearsals in 3 centres - performance in Waterloo, and the last weekend in April is designated for "Songfests" to the present time.
- 1977 - new format - Children's Choir (Helen Litz), and instrumental (Jake Janzen and Karen Klassen) are added to choral.
- 1979 - Art & photography displays are added.

Thus the great blessings of Christian Music were fostered in our Ontario churches. The 1981 Music Committee included - Frieda Wiebe (Chairman), Geraldo Wall, and Helen Warkentin.

CAMPING: 1957 - 1982:

Camping work can be interpreted in a variety of ways as it pertains to our provincial conference. Camping was utilized for Youth in the early 50's; then Children's Camp began in 1953, in the 60's programme was expanded to include Youth again, and today a full programme from young children to Senior Citizens is under way. It will be the purpose of this brief history to tell the history of camping in two parts: from 1957 to 1980 when the work came under this Board, and from 1980 to 1982, when the new Board of Camping Ministries was established.

One of the reasons for building a gym at Eden was for it to be utilized for camping in the summer. As already indicated, enrolment climbed into the hundreds after the gym had been built, but for swimming the children were taken to the Niagara River in trucks. In 1957 Herman Kroeker was the Director, 320 children were enrolled, and 53 conversions were recorded. Soon tents were purchased for sleeping out-doors on the Eden Campus, and buses were rented for transportation.

By the 60's the demand for better facilities and an expanded programme grew to the point where in 1966 a "Camp Committee" was formed to investigate property and bring recommendations for purchasing or renting new facilities. Due to the high cost of land, or so it was thought, it was decided not to buy, and for the balance of the 60's and 70's various renting programmes were followed. Teen camps were begun, first at Chesley Lake and then at Fairhavens, and by the late 60's fall retreats were also added. In 1969 another committee was formed called "Camp Property Committee" and new efforts were made, but again costs interfered. In 1970 a Camp Program Committee was added to the Christian Education "Board" and church contact people were asked to assist in the work through publicity and other activities.

In the 70's further efforts at purchasing property unfortunately did not materialize but the work continued energetically. Thanks to the leadership of Henry Esau and many enthusiastic colleagues the best was made of the circumstances and many fine camping experiences were made by the children and young people.



1957 Eden Camp transporting campers by truck to Lake Ontario. L. to R. - D. Neumann, D. Thiessen and Herman Kroeker.

Mention should also be made of Christian Service Brigade camping excursions starting in 1970 at Chesley Lake, with up to six churches participating. By 1971 The Camp Program Committee was recommending improved camping facilities, and it was decided to rent facilities at Camp Ryerson, a United Church camp in the Port Rowan area. Lou Friesen and others led the "Children's Camp" here

JUBILEE SONGFEST - 1981



Mass choir - Victor Martens, conductor; Ingrid Wiebe, accompanist.



Drama cast on stage: L-R Jake Willms, Jason Dahmer, & V. Loewen. Junior choir: conductor Helen Warkentin.

for a number of years, but certain conditions, especially the dangerous swimming facilities in Lake Erie there dictated a change again.

In 1973 Family camping was begun at Fairhavens on a relatively small scale, and later in the year the "Camp Property Committee" was dissolved since it was felt that escalating land prices were dictating against a purchase in the near future. In 1975 new facilities were rented in the Bracebridge area at a camp called "Oak-a-Lea", a privately owned camp. And thus the Youth camp moved from "Fair Glen" at Fairhavens and the Children's Camp at Ryerson to larger and better facilities in the lovely Muskoka area.

At the same time a contest among the young people to name the new camp was held, and the new and present name "CAMP CROSSROADS" with an accompanying Logo came into being. The contest winner was Wendy Boldt of Kitchener, who for a prize received free camping privileges that summer. The name was registered with "Christian Camping International" and the Ontario Campers Association and thus became the official camp of our conference in Ontario. With the better facilities the camp grew rapidly. Special programs, speakers, resource persons provided a rich and varied diet for our campers, and soon even these facilities became too constrictive.

Finally, in 1980, upon the urging of the Camp Committee, new facilities were again sought. The story that follows is truly miraculous! Although finances always seemed to have dictated against purchase, now a new spirit pervaded the conference. Largely this can be attributed to three factors: the enthusiasm and dedicated leadership of Camping leaders such as Henry Esau, Gerry Ediger, and Gord Hiebert, to mention only a few; the discovery of a beautiful camp property, Camp Massad in the Gravenhurst area; and finally the tremendous support given by the Conference, especially the Board of Trustees under the energetic leadership of Brother Artur Duerrstein.

Thus in 1980 a fund drive was begun to raise the considerable sum of $495,000.00 to cover the purchase price. A new Board called "The Board of Camping Ministries" was structured in consultation with The Constitution Committee, and John Reimer of Kitchener became the new chairman assisted by six further members, as well as Program Director Gerry Ediger and Administrator Henry Esau ably assisted by his wife Elizabeth. Tremendous efforts at fund raising and publicity followed, and with the good spirit prevailing and the earnest prayers of supporters $481,031.00 had been raised by December 31, 1981.

In September, 1980, legal possession had been accomplished and a Dedication Service was held. Since that time many "work camps", "orientation meetings" and general improvements have already been held and made. In the fall of 1981 hasty preparations for a trailer camp were made, a necessary adjunct for "family camping". A wide variety of activities for all ages have been added by the beautiful new facilities, everything from sailing to tennis. Tremendous improvements in the kitchen were made by the dedicated efforts of Tina Dyck and her husband Henry. Constant work and maintenance responsibilities have been undertaken by Art Rempel of Kitchener, and all together the work of camping was flourishing as 1982 dawned. In the summer of 1982 the camp will again accommodate up to 150 campers - from Juniors to Senior Citizens - and will be administered by Henry Esau, General Administrator, as well as by Joyce Schimpky, Glen Abrams, and Gord Hiebert.



Henry Esau, camp administrator and wife Elizabeth, secretary and treasurer of camp expenditures.

Camp Crossroads from Black Lake.



L.-R. Camp administrator Henry Esau & camp director Gerry Ediger.



THE BOARD OF EDUCATION:

(Eden, Bible School, and Student Ministries)

In 1957 our Provincial Conference still had two separate committees for Eden Christian College and The Ontario M.B. Bible Institute. The Eden Committee was divided into Executive and Extended committees, while the Bible School Committee followed the same basic pattern.

The 1957 Eden Committee consisted of six members chaired by Brother A.H. Redekop of St. Catharines, and the Extended Committee of sixteen members from the six churches in existence at that time. The Eden staff consisted of seven teachers - the Principal, Brother David Neumann, and Rudy Bartel, Peter J. Dick, Henry H. Dueck, Margaret Enns, Peter Hamm, and George Wichert. The Kitchen staff included Katie Neufeld and Justina Penner, and the John Klassens from St. Catharines took over the work as Dorm Parents from the Herman Kroekers. The student body numbered 195 divided into seven classes. The budget accepted totalled $47,500.00, including a deficit of $14,762.00 which the Conference passed, with faith that the membership would rise to the occasion and bring up the needed funds. (And they did!)

The Bible School Executive of 1957 was composed of three members chaired by Brother Kornelius P. Penner of Kitchener, and the extended committee of six members from the churches. There were also two "Spiritual Advisors", G.J. Epp and Jacob Penner. The new Principal was Wilmer Kornelson, and his staff included three part-time teachers, Henry Warkentin, Corny Braun, and Kay Epp (music). The student body consisted of 16 full time and 7 part-time (night course) students, divided into two classes. The 1957 Budget totalled $11,015.00, $6,505.00 of which was to apply to salaries. Quite an economical institute.

Since the Bible Institute unfortunately is not a continuing story, the history of it will be summarized first, and then the Eden History will be dealt with.

The Bible Institute: The Bible School Committee - 1957 - 1982:

In 1956 the Bible School moved from Virgil to the Kitchener M.B. Church's new education wing, and thus the balance of its existence took place in this locale. In 1957 $1,000.00 was paid in rent for the use of the facilities to the Kitchener Church, and that included all utilities. Meals were cooked in the new Education wing kitchen by Hilda Neumann, and served in the adjoining auditorium which served as a dining room. Recreation was carried on outside on the church parking lot and in the education wing basement. Students lived in the homes of members of the Kitchener church.

Many of the students in the 1957 to 1982 period attending Bible School did so as in between high school and college or university. A primary motivation was to consolidate and strengthen their spiritual lives before venturing out into the world of advanced secular training or the world of work. A further motivation was to prepare themselves for service in the church and in the community, in such areas as Christian Education and music. Over the years it has been encouraging to see how many of the graduates have done exactly that, although it must always be admitted that some did not.

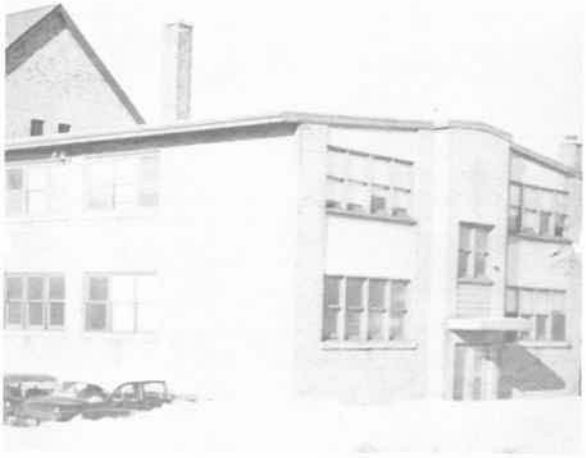
Activities of the students included deputational visits to the churches, groups, choirs, and special speakers, and did much to relate the work of the school to the provincial constituency. In Kitchener service opportunities in clubs, institutions, and visitation applied theory to practise. In most years a "Yearbook" was produced to summarize the activities of the year, and in the last years it was named "Kuriakon", a Greek word meaning, "That which belongs to the Lord". Courses included Music - theory, history, and conducting, Missions, Christian Education, Practical Theology, History, Homiletics, and Language. The program was a two year one, and was geared to more intensive study of the Bible and a practical application of that study.

Staff members through the years included, in addition to the ones mentioned before Henry and Elizabeth Esau, Edward Boldt, Vera Baerg, Walter Wiebe (deceased), John Boldt (deceased) & Paul Unger. A number of other staff, especially in the kitchen, such as Mrs. Margarete Neufeld, Mrs. Teigroeb, and Mrs. Corbin, assisted in the work. It was a work of dedication at minimum salary,



Left: Wilmer Kornelson - Principal 1957 - 1964.

Right: Kitchener M.B. Church, C.E. Building: used for Bible School 1956 - 1964.



usually not enough to carry through for the year so that part-time employment was necessary.

Board members worked faithfully and diligently to maintain the work through the years, spending many hours on finances, meetings, and other decision making. Certainly one of their most difficult decisions must have been in 1964 to discontinue the work. Although there had been some excellent years in the early 60's in terms of enrolment, a decline in 1963 and 1964 led to some discouragement, and it was felt that either a major change involving a new building program should be undertaken or Ontario students should be advised to seek Bible training at other recommended institutions. Despite a good deal of heartsearching, it was finally decided to opt for the latter.

Beginning in 1965, thus Ontario young people have been advised to attend our own institutions in Clearbrook, Hepburn, and Winkler, and to assist them subsidies have been paid to these institutions based upon the number of Ontario students registered. Students have also been paid personal subsidies to assist them, although in recent years this has been a small fraction as costs escalated. In 1968 when the entire Ontario Conference was restructured, the old Bible School Board was renamed a Committee and placed within the administration of the Board of Education where it remains today. The 1982 Bible School Committee consisted of John Reimer (Pt. Rowan), Wally Mandau, and Walter Bergmann.

Teacher 1962 Mr. John Boldt, Music, Doctrine, Bible.



Teacher 1962 Mr. Paul Unger, Bible, History, Youth Work.





THE BIBLE SCHOOL EXECUTIVE
1961 - 1962
Walter Janzen, Helmuth Mathies, John Wiebe, Wilmer Kornelson, David D. Wiens.

EDEN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE: (1957 - 1982)
Content assistance - C.P. Neufeld

Many of the facilities of Eden Christian College in 1957, although improved over the pioneer years, were still very primitive. Thus the story of these 25 years is one of general improvement of the physical facilities, increasing enrolment and enlargement of staff, the implications of this in terms of finances and tensions within the conference, and a gradual levelling off and decline in recent years due to escalating costs as well as the continuing problem of having to house quite young people in dormitory facilities.

1956 had seen the completion of a new auditorium at the back of the school and was of great assistance to the enrolment surge which came in the late 60's and early 70's. The dormitory housing was also improved somewhat, with the oldest back boys' dormitory, a terrible eyesore finally being removed. The central, former girls' dormitory was now renovated somewhat, and extra rooms contained most of the out-of-town students. When the large surge of enrolment came a portable classroom was converted into extra dormitory facilities for the girls. At the peak, over 40 students were housed in the dormitory. A variety of house-parents have served over the years, often full-time Eden teachers, which made the task very arduous. In recent years, however, full-time Dorm Parents have been more the rule, including for the last several years Peter and Molly Froese, a popular and faithful couple.

Many activities characterized the life of the school in addition to regular classes. Dramas, beginning with "The Carpenter" in 1957 became a meaningful and lasting tradition in the life of the school and did much to enhance the esthetic nature of the students' education. The Annual Graduation Banquet was always a highlight of the year, for both the parents as well as the graduates, not to mention the grade 11 class which had to prepare it. Annual field trips, especially for the graduates and the Grade 10's to Washington and Ottawa (to mention some of the places) were greatly looked forward to.

Sports increased in popularity as well as quality over the years, particularly in volleyball, basketball, and soccer, and many a year the Eden teams dominated the Christian Schools sports league in

BOARD OF EDUCATION - 1981
FRONT: L. Huebner, W. Dick (Treasurer), P. Neufeld (Chairman), J. Koop, E. Peters (Sec'y.), W. Dueck, D. Wiebe (V. Chairman); 2ND ROW: O. Goertz, W. Klassen, D. Hamm, P. Durksen, E. Esau, H. Schmidt, I. Block; 3RD ROW: G. Wall, G. Ediger, A. Rosa, W. Bergmann, W. Mandau, P. Klassen, F. Wiens; 4TH ROW: J. Klassen, J. Klassen, D. Doerksen, H. Hubert, R. Ratzlaff (Principal of Eden), J. Klassen, K. Wagner, N. Klassen.



these team sports. Clubs, including such as The Yearbook worked hard to produce a fine record of the year's activities. Many a fund drive for various projects around the school was vigorously supported by the students through work days and other means. And always there were the parents to undergird, and the staff to lead, coach, and advise, many times far beyond the call of duty.

In 1960 after ten years of competent leadership, Brother David Neumann resigned as principal and was replaced by Brother Rudy Bartel, one of the staff for the past six years. Brother Bartel served until 1966 when Brother George Wichert, vice-principal, succeeded him. Brother Wichert then acted as principal until 1978, when after 23 years, twelve of them as principal, he resigned to return to the classroom full-time. He was succeeded by Brother Ray Ratzlaff, who came to Eden from a private school in Germany. It would be impossible to mention the accomplishments of each staff member of Eden, but one thing should be recorded for posterity, the teachers of Eden were as loyal to their school and constituency as any private school in Canada. Many of them have been with the school for a great number of years, and this has given stability and a sense of strong loyalty and tradition to the institution, a very necessary ingredient for a successful school.

Another particularly important emphasis at Eden over the years has been the spiritual emphasis. Without this, of course, there would be no need to have such a school. Each year, in the fall, a spiritual emphasis week was held, with guest speakers invited to present daily messages and challenges for the students, particularly with the view to commit their lives to Christ. Many memories will linger in the hearts and minds of former students of those occasions, and many speakers, Waldo Wiebe, J.J. Toews, Rudy Boschmann, and Aaron Schmidt to mention only a few, will be remembered for their dedicated service to our precious young people!

Also, not to be forgotten were the essential services of the support staff in the office and custodial work. Many efficient secretaries did much to maintain administrative essentials, summers included. In 1957 Theresa Klassen was the secretary and John Klassen performed custodial duties in addition to "House-parenting". Over the years others L. Boldt, Linda Klassen, Hilda Froese, Lorri Andres and Nancy Penner to mention most have acted as secretaries in the office. Custodians have included such names as Peter Renpenning, and especially in the latter years Kurt Hamm worked hard under sometimes difficult circumstances.

In the whole period the various committees and boards did much to maintain the essential work of guiding and administering the school, especially in its relation to the conference. It has always been amazing to see how, once these people got involved in Eden Committee activities, their interest and support for the school has grown. In the 70's as the costs escalated study commissions to find other financing alternatives had to be studied and recommended to the conference. The invaluable work done by such men as Brother Henry H. Dueck, Chairman from 1965 to 1975 in this area, as well as in constant administrative changes and the building plan of 1974 to 1975, and the present chairman, Peter Neufeld, and treasurer, Werner Dick, must never be forgotten.



Eden Christian College as it appears since 1975. The new addition is on the right, and was completed in that year.

As already mentioned, in 1975 the greatest and most expensive building program in the conference's history was undertaken at Eden. Enrolment had risen to close to 300 students with ten classes, and the use of portables, up to three as well as renovating the old building and adding new classrooms that way was no longer sufficient. Thus, with the energetic leadership of the Board, and great sacrifices from the Brotherhood, the building was dedicated on January 19, 1975. Tribute was paid at the ceremony to the tremendous leadership and hard work given by Brother Jake Boldt, Building Committee Chairman, and Brother Abe Froese, the building supervisor.

Today the College sits on its traditional site of "Locust Grove", a beautiful and well operating school. Although a recent decline in enrolment and budget, problems have caused concern, the school stands as a beacon to the ideal of Christian Education, and the future points to a more varied and relevant curriculum, so as to better serve the children of our constitutency - our children - the future leaders of our Ontario Conference!

STUDENT MINISTRIES COMMITTEE:

Presently this committee consists of Peter Durksen, Chairman (Ariss), John D. Klassen, and David Hamm. Begun as an adjunct of the Board of Education in the mid-sixties to maintain a liaison with our young people on the various campuses of our Ontario Universities and colleges, the work of this committee slowly expanded with the addition of a part-time Director of Student Services. Brother Al Enns, also part-time Pastor at Waterloo, was the first to fill this post. (1967-68)

Lists of students were compiled with the assistance of the churches, and visits, letters, and later also retreats were utilized to foster spiritual growth of the students while engaged in secular studies. By the early 70's regular retreats were being held at such places as Pioneer Camp, Five Oaks and other places. Special Speakers such as Frank C. Peters, Vern Ratzlaff and John Redekop were utilized, and although attendance was usually relatively low, valuable experiences and spiritual insight were attained.

In 1975 Brother Al Enns resigned after eight years of dedicated service, and the Committee under the chairmanship of Ron Mathies found a replacement in Brother John Regier of Waterloo, again on a part-time basis. Basically the same format was followed as under Brother Enns, with some increase in personal visitation. With regret the Committee



THE EDEN BOARD - 1961: SITTING: Mr. P. Klassen, Secretary; Mr. J. Wiebe. STANDING: Mr. B. Redekop, Mr. A. Willms, Mr. L. Martens, Mr. J. Braun, Chairman; Mr. R. Bartel, Principal. ABSENT: Mr. C. Reimer.



The 1975 Grads



The 1975 Staff: G. Wichert, principal.

accepted Bro. Regier's resignation on June 30, 1979 and replaced him with Brother Gerry Ediger of Vineland who had just graduated from our Seminary in Fresno.

Since that time Brother Ediger has continued the work in much the same fashion, but in 1981, having accepted the pastorate in Vineland he resigned. At the 1982 convention The Board of Education recommended that the "Director" position be discontinued, but that the Committee keep on with the Student Directory and maintaining a liaison with pastors. It was also hoped that pastors would pick up the work of communicating with their young people on university campuses, and that the Board of Christian Education consider programs for these students when planning their C.E. Conferences.

Perhaps one could surmise at this time that one of the main constraints in maintaining this work in 1982 was budget problems. With a deficit of $60,000.00 in the Board of Education, this work, in terms of priorities, was felt to be expendable, at least partly, and so this avenue of service has passed into history. The work of the committee however will continue, and they will need much grace and help from God to make it meaningful!



The 1982 Student Ministries Committee: From L. - Peter Durksen (Chairman), Dave Hamm, Gerry Ediger, and John Klassen.

TABOR MANOR HISTORY

The idea of building our own M.B. Senior Citizens Home was first broached to the Ontario Conference in 1963. Till then, our Seniors had mainly been looked after by their families, and in a few cases, placed in the United Mennonite Home For The Aged in Vineland or Leamington.

A Study Commission considered various possibilities over the next several years, and in 1967 came to the Conference with concrete recommendations, which were ultimately accepted. A Board of Directors was elected, consisting of the brethren J.E. Janzen (Chairman), C.J. Rempel (Vice-chairman), H.P. Thiessen (Secretary-treasurer), J. Klassen, L. Martens, W. Janzen and A. Froese. The Conference then purchased approximately 7 acres of land adjacent to the Scott St. M.B. Church in St. Catharines; and the work began in earnest.

Many difficulties were encountered during the months of planning and negotiating with government agencies, but in the end, the combination of diligent, dedicated workers and a great deal of prayer prevailed. Construction began in July, 1968, and was completed a year later. Total cost of the project was $784,000.00. The first resident, Mrs. Tina Penner, was welcomed to Tabor Manor on May 3rd, 1969. Since then over 230 elderly persons have been admitted to the Home, which has a capacity of 44 residents in residential-care, and another 30 in bed-care.

Initially, many of our own people were reluctant to move to a Senior Citizens Home. Less than half of the original "family" were members of the M.B. Conference. Today the figure stands at over 75% while the German-speaking component is at 93%.

The express goal of the Board has always been to provide for our Senior Citizens "care, comfort, and the opportunity for spiritual fellowship as well as social contacts in a Christian environment". With this in mind, the program of the Home was designed with a rich spiritual orientation in addition to providing a full range of physical care. An on-going program of therapy, activities and social involvement was also developed. Over the years a great many changes and additions have been made to the actual program, but the goal has remained the same.

By mid-1974 it was obvious that yet another type of accommodation was much in demand for Seniors, namely self-contained Senior Citizens' Apartments. The Board immediately set to work, first with a feasibility study, and then with a preliminary proposal to the proper government agencies. Unfortunately the red tape jungle had increased in size and scope since our first project and it was not until June, 1977 that ground was actually broken. The 4-storey apartment building and a new 2,400 sq. ft. auditorium were completed in early 1978 at a

TABOR MANOR: 1969 - 1982



Tabor Manor Board - 1967 - 69. L. to R. Walter Janzen, Leonard Martens, Abe Froese, John Klassen, Harry Thiessen, John Janzen (Chmn.), C.J. Rempel.



First residents being greeted at Tabor Manor May 3, 1969. L. to R. Mrs. Lydia Penner, Mrs. Tina Penner, Rev. Henry Penner, John Janzen (Bd. Chmn.), Ed Wiens (Admin.).

total cost of just over $1,300,000.00. The first tenant, Rev. Gerhard Epp, moved in on March 28, 1978, even before the building was completed, and the rest of the 62 units were spoken for or occupied almost as quickly as they were available. The building consists of 54 regular 1-bedroom units, 4 1-bedroom handicap units, and 4 2-bedroom units. It is connected to the Home by a heated passageway.

Both the Home and the apartment building have enjoyed virtually a 100% occupancy rate from the very start.

As a Board, we are grateful to God for what He has done at Tabor Manor in the past 12 years, and for the opportunity of being involved in this important service to the Seniors of our constituency.

TABOR MANOR CURRENT PROGRAM

The programme in the Home divides into 3 main categories - spiritual, physical and social. Some of these, in turn consist of several sub-categories.

SPIRITUAL

Since Tabor Manor is, in effect, an arm of the church, the spiritual emphasis is of prime importance. Morning devotions are held in the dining room just before breakfast each day. These are led by administrative staff, assisted by some of the seniors on weekends. Bible studies are held in German twice weekly and in English twice weekly, and involve the apartment tenants as well as the residents of the Home. One evening a week is devoted to a musical/devotional program presented by one of our churches. Each Sunday the services of the Scott St. M.B. church are brought into the Home via the p.a. system.

A part-time chaplain co-ordinates the spiritual program, and does regular visitation and counselling.

PHYSICAL

The physical program covers the nursing, dietary, housekeeping, custodial and administrative areas. All of these are geared toward providing an optimum level of care and assistance to the residents, while still encouraging them to remain as independent as possible. For example, telephone bills may be paid at the office, but ambulatory residents are encouraged to walk over to the nearby plaza to do this.

Our kitchen staff provides tasty, nourishing meals and snacks, with lots of good Mennonite dishes included, like wareneki, borscht, rollkuchen, and of course a regular weekly baking of zwieback. Since many residents have special needs, much care is given to providing the right diet, such as salt-free, fat-free, gluten-free, diabetic etc.

The housekeeping and maintenance staffs are kept busy keeping the Home clean and in good repair. Here too, residents are encouraged to do as much of their own housecleaning as they are able to.

The nursing department accounts for a good 50% of our staff. Much patient, understanding love is required as they endeavour to meet the residents' varied health-care needs. Under the direction of the Home Physician and the Director of Nursing, a complete range of nursing care is offered, eliminating the need for residents to be moved elsewhere if their condition deteriorates. Residents are also relieved of the responsibility of remembering when to take which pill. All medications are dispensed at the proper times by a Registered Nurse.

An on-going rehabilitation program has seen excellent results as some residents have been guided back to a much higher level of independence and self-sufficiency.

The administrative staff is, of course, always available to assist residents with any necessary paper work or other problems.

SOCIAL

The social program covers a variety of areas, from small-group bingo games to hundreds of people at a family picnic. It includes sightseeing trips, film nights, bowling, barbecues, watermelon feasts, birthday parties, and a host of other activities which residents are encouraged to participate in. The Home Auxiliary has been particularly active in this area. It provides a valuable service to the residents, and also constitutes an important link with the community. The involvement of the Auxiliary in such areas as evening snacks, hairdressing, birthday parties and the annual Open House, has been much appreciated.

THE FUTURE

As the waiting list continues to grow, the need for expanding our facilities becomes more and more obvious. The Board is concerned about this, and is proceeding to prepare plans for an addition to our building so that we will be in a position to move quickly whenever the current freeze on government funding is lifted.



TABOR MANOR BOARD - 1981: L.-R. FRONT: L. Martens, Walter Janzen (V. Chairman), John E. Janzen (Chairman), & Rita Siebert. REAR L.-R.: H. Janzen, J. Boldt, D. Willms.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: 1957 - 1982:

Originally referred to as the "Direktorium" this Board has played a unique role in the history of our Conference. Probably no other Board has been so intrinsically involved with all aspects of our activities as this one, and that mainly because conference activities require funds, and this Board was entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing financial expenditures. So, whether it was Home Missions, Bethesda, or Education, this Board was in the thick of things.



C.J. Rempel, Chairman of "Direktorium" 1957 - 1960.

Back in 1957 the Direktorium was chaired by C.J. Rempel of Kitchener, a brother much taken up with administrative activities in our conference over the years. Four further members included H. Wichert, J. Reimer, J. Kaethler, and Walter Janzen, the latter also very active in this area over the years.

As one examines their work, it is obvious that most of the Committee's time was spent in overseeing Conference property, its acquisition, maintenance, and dissolution. This involved debentures, loans, insurances, renovations, additions, new building, and all those things which provide for the smooth functioning of the conference institutions.

One interesting recommendation that was passed in 1957 illustrates the fine detail that the Committee was involved in during the performance of its duties. The recommendation was that any improvement to Conference property, including new inventory, which cost over $50.00 was to be reported to the "Direktorium"!

One major difference from today's Board of Trustees was that today the Conference Treasurer comes under the Board of Trustees, while in the early years the Direktorium had its own treasurer, and the Conference Treasurer was part of the Conference Executive. But basically the work has remained the same. Wise counsel was always needed in a small conference with great ambitions. The principles of giving to the Lord's work often came under discussion. One of the major issues in the last 25 years has been "Voluntary Giving" versus (if one can call it that) "Budgeting". Even today, although the Conference follows the "Budget System", it is strongly tinged with "Voluntary Giving"!

Here, then, are some of the activities, certainly not an exhaustive list, of this Board in the last quarter Century. Each year, towards the beginning of the annual or semi-annual conference (the latter utilized till the mid-sixties when the Council of Boards system came in) the Committee would give its report. The work is surely impressive. In one year alone, for instance, 1963, the Eden Dorm was renovated, the Toronto Church was constructed, the parsonage in Coldwater was sold, and all insurances and maintenance had to be administered.

Some other examples include the work of the new Board after restructuring in 1968 (the Conference Treasurer now worked with the Board). That year was a busy one again - $50,000.00 was collected for our new Senior Citizen's home (Tabor Manor), the debt on the Toronto Church was retired, a new manse for Mountview was financed, a lawsuit against our Mountview Church was pending in regard to the construction of its new parking lot, and the Budget for the year had to be drawn up. (The latter also a new task).

And thus it went, year after year, with sums of money, pledging, financing, funding commissions, planning, all becoming larger figures and more and more complex. Great building projects at Bethesda, Eden, Tabor Manor, and most recently of all the greatest project, Camp Crossroads, had to be planned and brought to fruition. Careful administration of fixed assets now totalling over a million dollars had to be maintained through careful supervision.

To the eternal credit of our Conference, to the faithful givers of our Conference, we can here record that no debt has yet gone unpaid, and no project has foundered to the embarrassment of all. The Board has proven the Biblical adage that the wise Christian is a wise steward and faithful with the goods that God has entrusted to him.

Many names appear in the roll of faithful and fruitful workers on this Board, and probably it would not be wise to list them all, but certainly the names in addition to the first Direktorium already listed should include John J. Neufeld, Harry Thiessen, Henry Ens, Abe Froese, Jake Reimer, John Braun, and Artur Duerrstein. The present Board includes Chairman Don Boese, Vineland, Ernie Reimer, Ernest Friesen (Conference Treasurer), Abe Froese, Abe Willms, John Hildebrand, and John Klippenstein.

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE:

(Our Ontario Involvement)

From 1957 to 1964 the Ontario Conference's involvement in what was called "Hilfswerk" (Welfare) was rather broadly interpreted. Bethesda, for instance, as well as Ailsa Craig Boys Farm, "Peace Conference", and "Provincial M.C.C." were separately represented yet all broadly recog-

nized as "Welfare" work. A further organization, the "N.R.R.O." (Non-Resistant Relief Organization) was also represented in our Conference and usually together with Ailsa Craig.

Brother C.J. Rempel and Brother D. Neumann in 1957 represented the "Peace Conference", C.J. Rempel also Ailsa Craig and N.R.R.O., and G. Friesen, John Neufeld, and M. Durksen, Provincial M.C.C. Some of the latter were National Organizations while some were provincial, and when reports on the work were given they reflected this situation. For instance, the work of N.R.R.O. was a national one, with relief flowing to needy countries around the world. Ailsa Craig, on the other hand was a local Ontario work operating under the general umbrella of M.C.C. and solely supported by the various Mennonite Conferences of Ontario.

What is striking about this period is the willingness and generosity shown by our people in supporting particularly our brothers and sisters in South America and Europe, many of whom were still adjusting to the exigencies inherent in their experiences from W.W. II. In fact, the Conference Budgets in these years reveal that when emergencies arose our Conference responded as well or better than other Mennonite Conferences, especially for South America and Europe. Often the same names appear as our representatives through these years, and this characteristic seems to carry on after 1964 as well.

In 1964 a general re-organization and streamlining of M.C.C. Canada was initiated by the C.H.P.C. (Conference of Historic Peace Churches), the latter the general umbrella under which relief had been carried on in Canada. In accordance with this, M.C.C. Ontario as we know it today was also brought into being. Within this framework now all the work of M.C.C. was structured, including a) Executive, b) Relief and Immigration, c) Peace and Social Concerns, d) Mennonite Disaster Service, and e) Welfare Institutions (Ailsa Craig). Of particular note since that time has been participation in "Disaster Service", with many volunteers recruited by local "Disaster Service" representatives giving a fine testimony to their faith by helping disaster victims in Canada, U.S.A., and Central America (e.g. Nicaragua).

By 1982 other changes had taken place in M.C.C. organization, so that today we have the following: Community Service Section (Mainly Voluntary Service), represented by Marvin Warkentin, Craigwood (Ailsa Craig) by Gerald Peters, Disaster Service by Abe Froese, Peace and Social Concerns, Ted Braun (now replaced), Relief and Immigration by Enos Bearinger, and Service Promotion Section (publicity) by Frank Wiens. Two very recent organizations added to M.C.C. include an Ontario Immigrants Advisory Committee to assist Mexican Mennonites here, and the Community Justice Ministries Committee to assist criminal offenders and victims.

Our Conference has been greatly blessed in the number of younger and older individuals and couples who have served under M.C.C. both abroad and locally. The experience has been enriching for them, for the people whom they served, and for our own conference. Co-operation with the other Mennonite and Brethren In Christ Conferences has made possible certain projects for the needy which we ourselves could never have managed alone. Representation by M.B.'s in M.C.C. over the past 25 years has always been very respectable, and the words of encouragement from M.C.C. Ontario Directors in recent years such as Doug Snider, Irwin Wiens and now Ray Schlegel have done much to maintain a good feeling of co-operation in areas of common concern.

It would be impossible here to mention or emphasize names of individuals, there have been so many, but suffice it to say that the future holds much promise for further service for those that have a concern for the suffering, especially suffering in material or physical ways. M.C.C. has established a fine reputation throughout the world as one of the most efficient and caring relief organizations. Some of our brotherhood, quite frankly, has at times been somewhat concerned that co-operation of M.C.C. with other countries and agencies especially in the area of social concerns has sometimes gone too far, but perhaps this has been due to lack of information or effort by M.C.C. to assist all people, wherever they are located, and perhaps even "Friend or Foe". Today, 1982, sees M.C.C. still serving "In the name of Christ" in ravaged countries throughout the world. At present also, M.C.C. Ontario is undergoing further Constitutional revision which will bring even better organization about. Today also, the great relief sales are doing tremendous work, as in the New Hamburg Relief Sale, in raising great sums of money for relief. And so the task continues in a world with ever increasing problems!

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SERVICE:

In the 1966 Annual Conference in Vineland the first report of this organization as full members of the conference was read by Sister Olga Enns on behalf of Sister Bertha Wichert, President. An executive of 11 ladies had one meeting and sponsored a provincial rally held in the Virgil M.B. Church. The speaker was Mrs. Hector MacMillan, wife of a missionary killed by rebels in the Congo. The project accepted for the coming year was assistance to a "Girls training school in the Congo" (now Zaire).

Since that time the ladies of our conference have pursued basically the same format of activities, namely, an annual rally held in one of our churches on a rotating basis, and projects where the money raised has come from the church groups and rally collections and then turned over to a missionary

project or another worthy project. The effort of the ladies has won wide acceptance and has done much to foster appreciation one for another within the churches of our conference.

Attendance over the years has varied from 400 to 600, although the one in this coming spring at Eden Christian College is expected to reach one thousand with the former Elizabeth Elliott as guest speaker. Some collections have amounted to as high as two to three thousand dollars, and many causes related to missions but often overlooked by other agencies of our conference have received valuable support, especially in the area of caring for the families of missonaries.

The executive now consists of a president (presently Sister Viola Eckert), a vice-president (Marian Loewen), and a secretary-treasurer (Olga Enns), and meets in the fall with representatives from each church which form the total executive. At this time they plan the rally which is held each spring in April as well as the special project and rally offering.

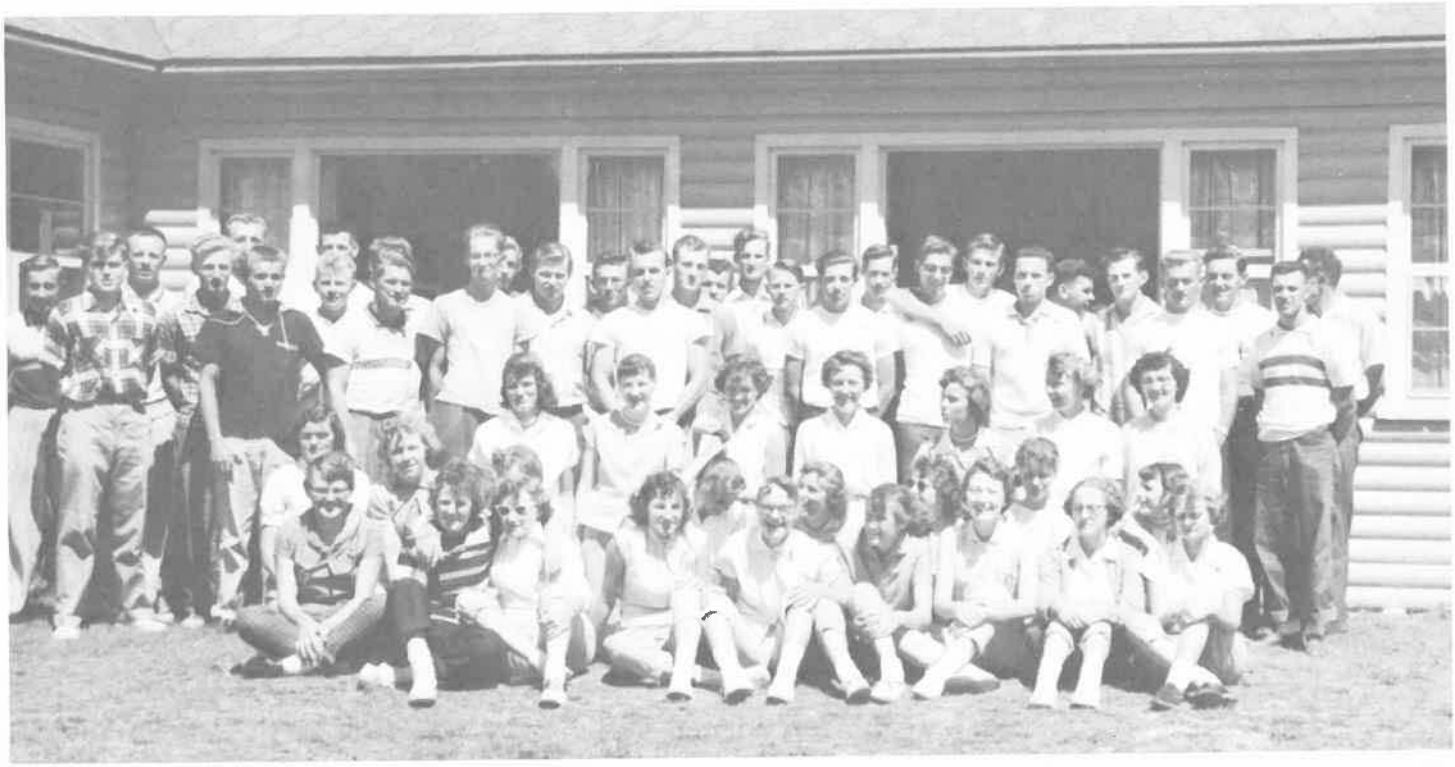
Presidents and fellow core executive members serve for three year terms. Since 1966 the presidents have included Bertha Wichert, Olga Enns, Elva Suderman, Nell Mathies, and Viola Eckert. Each year also a report is read at the conference, which over the years has most often been read by Sister Olga Enns of Kitchener. A 1970 Conference Resolution reads: "The Conference commends you for your many hours of labour and sacrificial giving in support of our institutions and the missions program." This is a fine summary of the history of this organization, an organization that has done much to enrich our conference and its workers.

FINAL SUMMARY:

This then concludes a historical summary of the major agencies of our Ontario Conference. The present structure was basically finalized in our 1970 Constitution after considerable restructuring. Although many aspects and personalities have had to be omitted, it is hoped that the general flavour of the conference in the 1957 to 1982 period has been caught. The story of our conference is a story of great devotion to God's cause and His Kingdom by many sincere and dedicated people. May it serve as an inspiration to our future generations. May it serve as a reminder "When your children shall ask" in the years to come.

For those discouraged by the brevity of this account, a reassurance! A full and detailed history of our Ontario Conference and its churches is presently being written through the efforts of the "Ontario M.B. Historical Society" and particularly by Sister Anne Wiebe of the Kitchener church. The "Ontario M.B. Historical Society" operates within the confines of three conferences, our Ontario Conference where it serves in historical projects such as the 1981-82 Jubilee, the Canadian Conference where it comes under the Board of Higher Education, and the General Conference, where it comes under the "Historical Commission" of the Board of Christian Literature.

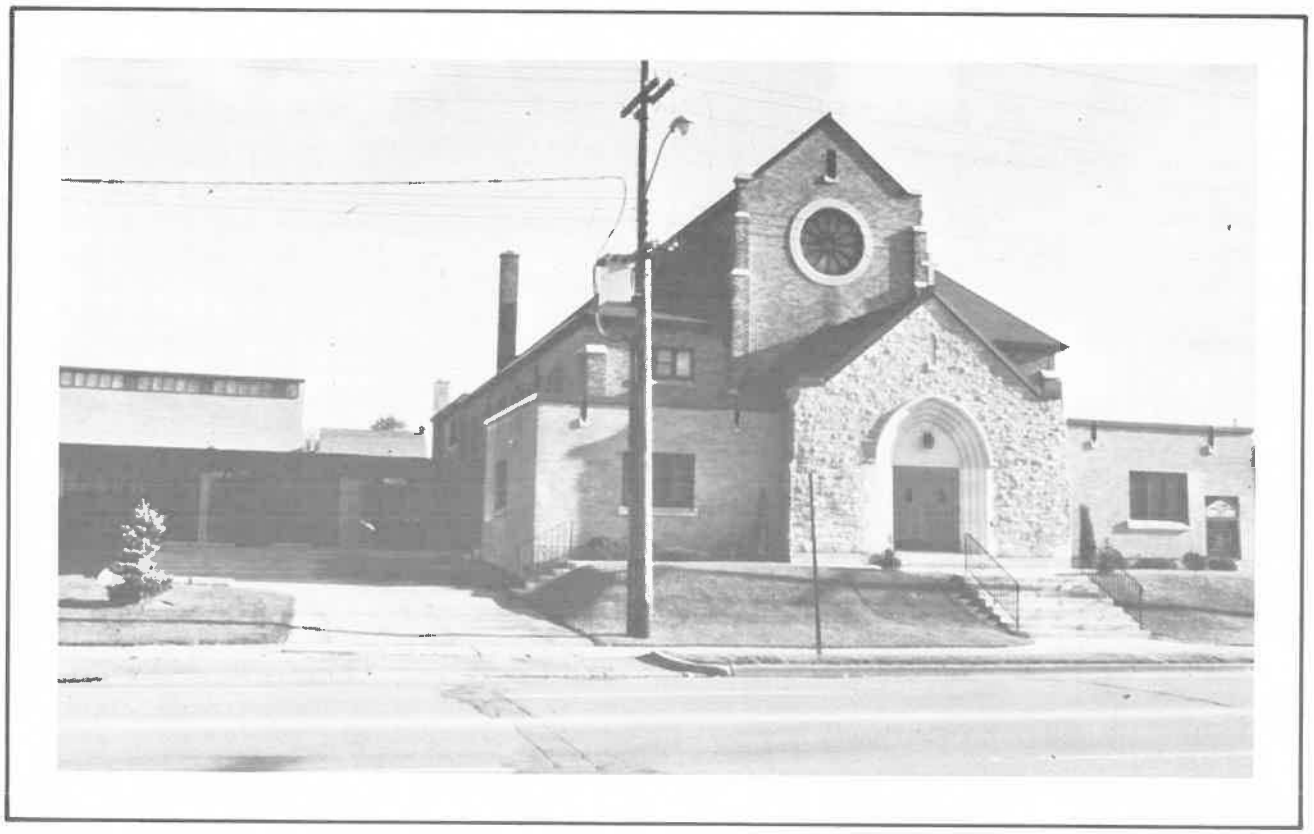
The minutes of most churches and our Ontario Conference were microfilmed up to date in 1979 and now are available in the Hiebert Memorial Library at the Seminary in Fresno. Many church records and a church historical summary are also available in the very fine Archives of our Canadian Conference at M.B.B.C. in Winnipeg where they are under the care of Conference Archivist, Brother Ken Reddig. It is hoped that this "Jubilee History" will serve as one source of information on our conference and church activities in Ontario over the past quarter century!



Ontario Youth at 1957 Youth Retreat at Chesley Lake

KITCHENER M.B. CHURCH
1925 -

By Anne Wiebe





Pastor John F. Froese: 1974 -

"Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Isaiah 51: 1

The following brief historical resume of the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church is to serve a dual purpose. Primarily it is to be a reminder of its origin and early beginnings, and it is hoped, that from those who are concerned, it will evoke the words of Psalm 103: 2, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

The first group of Mennonites arrived at the Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo on July 19, 1924. From here they were billeted on the farms of the Swiss Mennonites, who live in the surrounding area. The newcomers were thus scattered, and this enhanced their feeling of loneliness in a strange land.

The need for fellowship with kindred folk was soon recognized, and the first attempt to meet this need was a meeting of ministers in the home of Rev. Jacob W. Reimer at New Dundee, in September 1924. At the same time the immigrants began to meet for spiritual edification in private homes in Baden, Breslau, and St. Jacobs. Consequently in St. Jacobs, at the home of Jacob P. Wiens, on May 25, 1925, 18 persons became charter members of the Molotschna Mennonite Brethren Church, which was



Pastor: 1949-54: 1965-73.

Dr. Frank C. Peters

organized at that time. Rev. Jacob. P. Friesen was elected leader of the congregation. The name of the church denoted its historical roots in southern Russia and was used until 1932, when the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches was formed. Rev. H.H. Janzen became its first moderator.

Because the young congregation owned no church building at this time, services were at first conducted on Sunday afternoons, alternately at St. Jacobs and at Bethany Missionary Church (then Bethany Mennonite), Lancaster St. in Kitchener. In 1925, however, a large hall on the third floor of a business block at 40 King St. East, Kitchener, was rented, and for the next ten years this hall served as a regular meeting place for the people who were rapidly drifting from the farms to the city, in order to find employment in the factories.

Immediately upon having obtained a spot to congregate, a Sunday School, with classes for children and adults, was organized. A choir, under the direction of Gerhard J. Enns, came into being, although practices during the week had to be conducted for some time in private homes, because the hall was at first available on Sundays only. In 1931 N.J. Fehderau became choir director, a position to which he devoted himself faithfully for twenty-seven years. Similarly John Goerz, the succeeding choir director, devoted twenty-one years to the ministry of music in the church.



Sacred Song Quartet 1956-: L-R - E. Boldt, J. Willms, D.D. Wiens, C.J. Rempel.

Very soon the church members recognized music as an effective means of outreach and witness to the community at large. This conviction led to the formation of the Menno Male Quartet ca. 1938-1942, and in 1946 to the first venture in live radio broadcasting with a weekly devotional programme entitled: "Hymns at Eventide". Somewhat later, ca. 1949 this programme was replaced by a broadcast in the German language: "Goldene Sonntagmorgenstunde", a venture that was terminated in ca. 1965. The year 1960 saw the formation of the Sacred Song Quartet, another male ensemble which has continued to the present.

After conducting services at 40 King St. East for ten years, a church building was purchased at 53



Rev. & Mrs. H.H. Janzen - Pastor and Minister of German Services. 1932-44 and 1974-75.

Church St. on September 30, 1935. This sanctuary served the congregation until 1952, when it was seen necessary to enlarge the premises in order to accommodate the growing membership. Having recognized the need to expand, a lot was purchased at 19 Ottawa St. North, where the present sanctuary took shape. This was dedicated on January 19, 1953. About this time two affiliate congregations dissolved, and joined the Kitchener church, New Hamburg in 1952, and Hespeler in 1953.

The newly constructed facilities enabled the expansion of the Christian education programme. To facilitate this on an even greater scale, an education wing was added to the church in 1956. This additional room became the home of the Conference Bible School from 1955-65. An ambitious mid-weekly Bible-study programme for the entire family was introduced about this time, as were also various outreach programmes, e.g., Daily Vacation Bible School, a Sunday School project in Puslinch in 1948, and a Sunday School project in Brighton Public School in Waterloo in 1961. This latter effort resulted in the establishment of the first Mennonite Brethren Church in Waterloo, which was organized in 1967. The Puslinch mission was transferred in 1965 to the Baptist Church in Preston. In 1961 the Zion Mennonite Brethren Church was formed by a group of members from the parent church at 19 Ottawa St. North.

Two further additions to the church building on Ottawa St. must be mentioned, the gymnatorium, built and dedicated in 1971, and the foyer in 1976 added in order to relieve congestion at the Ottawa St. entrance.

As the church reached its Golden Jubilee year in 1975, various organizations celebrated anniversaries, commemorating years of service for the Lord and his people, e.g., May 31 and June 1, marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church, on October 10, 1978, the Women's Missionary Service, originally known as "Gabenverein", celebrated its fortieth anniversary,

and on October 23, 1980, the senior women of the church observed the fiftieth anniversary of their mission-circle, "Tabeaverein". It was felt that the commemoration of the formation of the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches in 1932, should be celebrated in Old Testament fashion during the jubilee year, rather than on the anniversary date itself. Therefore, February 22, 1981, marked the special observance of this day at Eden Christian College, Niagara-on-the-Lake. Of special interest and concern to everyone there was the purchase (1981) of a conference campground — Camp Crossroads.

Vital Statistics

Charter Members of the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church — May 25, 1925

*Jacob P. Friesen	*John Rempel	*Mary Braun
*Jacob Wiens	*Isaac Sawatzky	Maria Fehderau
*Maria Wiens	*John Lohrenz	*Mrs. Peter Friesen
*Jacob W. Reimer	*Lena Dick	*Mrs. Henry Braun
*Gerhard Dyck	*Anna Dick	
Gerhard Enns	Katharina Swartz	*Deceased

Leadership of the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church — 1925 - 1981

Jacob P. Friesen, Pastor 1925 - 32
Henry H. Janzen, Pastor 1932 - 44
Jacob A. Kutz, Chairman of Leadership Committee 1944 - 45
Henry G. Thielmann, Pastor 1945 - 49
Frank C. Peters, Pastor 1949 - 54
Isaac T. Ewert, Interim Pastor 1954 - 54 (9 months)
Jacob J. Toews, Pastor 1954 - 59
William J. Schmidt, Pastor 1959 - 64
Isaac H. Thiessen, Interim Pastor 1964 - 65
Frank C. Peters, Pastor 1965 - 73
John F. Froese, Pastor 1974 - present
Ted Braun, Assistant Pastor 1979 - 81
Jim Pike, Assistant Pastor 1981 - —

Choir Leaders

Gerhard J. Enns, Conductor 1925 - 28
Henry Wiebe, Conductor 1928 - 31
N.J. Fehderau, Conductor 1931 - 58
John Goerz, Conductor 1958 - 79
Geraldo Wall, Conductor 1979 - —
Jake Willms, Conductor, youth choir 1975 - —

Mary & Henry Dueck & Family.



Henry Dueck, Ass't. to Pastor, 1964-1977.

Membership of Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church

1925 — 018 charter members	1966 — 427 members
1926 — 052 members	1967 — 394 members
1935 — 151 members	1969 — 403 members
1945 — 208 members	1972 — 412 members
1955 — 392 members	1973 — 406 members
1960 — 423 members	1976 — 438 members
1962 — 394 members	1979 — 451 members
1963 — 386 members	1980 — 450 members
1964 — 399 members	1981 — 468 members
	1982 — 500 members

In retrospect we cannot help but rejoice in view of the many blessings the Lord has seen fit to shower upon us. By the same token, however, we pause in awe and reverence, realizing the corresponding responsibility laid upon our shoulders, "for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more". Luke 12:48.

Mrs. Elizabeth Dyck: Pioneer Church Member, President - Nähverein.





John Goerz: Senior Choir Leader 1958-1979

Anne & John Goerz & Family.

Harold Fehderau: Missionary and Translator 1958 -



Nancy & Harold Fehderau & Family.

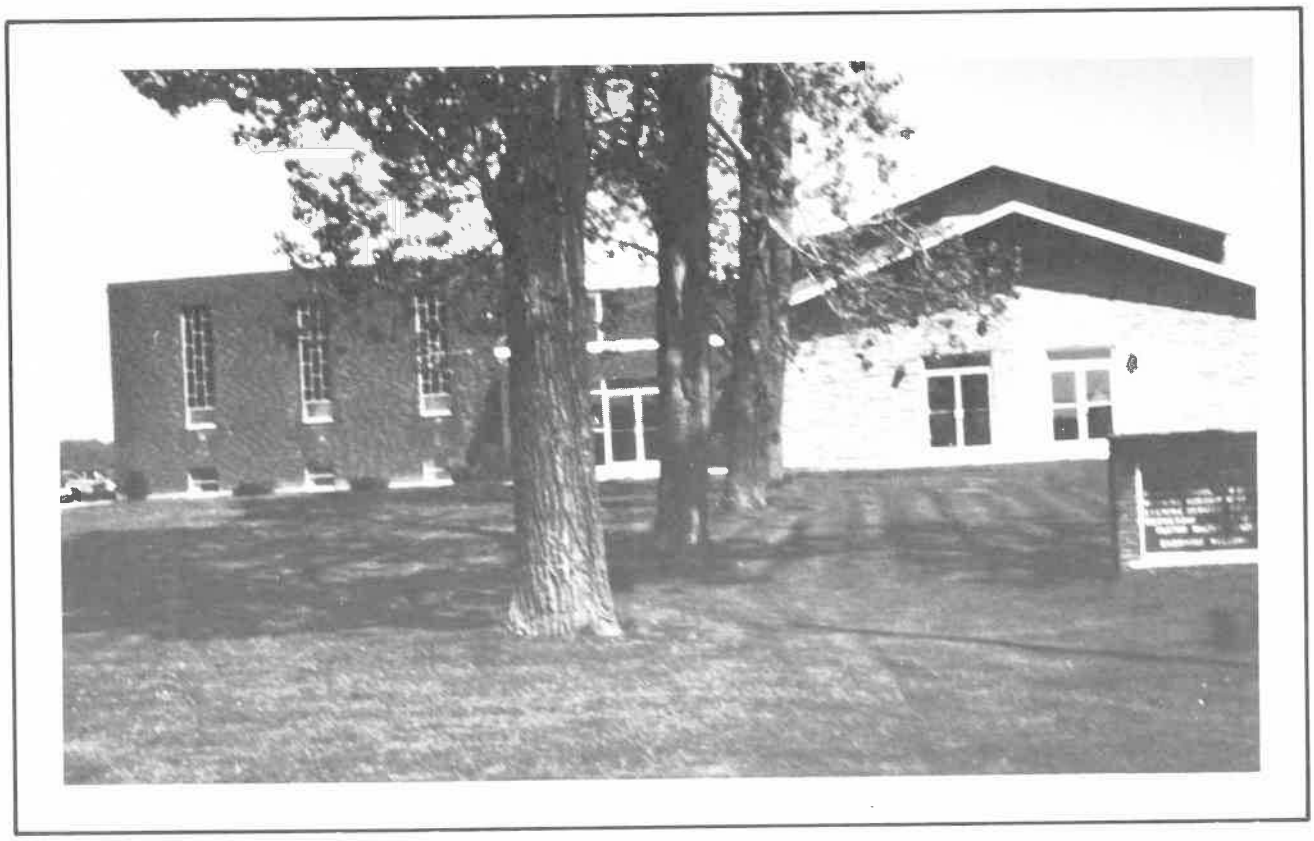


Ella & Neil Isaac.

Neil Isaac: S.S. Superintendent 1957-1967
C.E. Director: 1967-1973
Church Treasurer: 1973-1979

PORT ROWAN M.B. CHURCH
1927 -

By Catherine Thiessen





Pastor Corny Braun and wife Irene: 1979-

CHANGE WITH GROWTH AND PRAISE 1956-81

(Port Rowan M.B. Church was founded Oct. 1927 with 11 members. See "He Leadeth" for historic foundation years.)

On the wall of our former church sanctuary hung the motto, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever." (Heb. 13:8) The last 25 years of our church life denote **change,** with growth and praise. "All may change, but Jesus never. Glory to His Name!"

Our **leadership** changed from the unpaid services of several ordained ministers, with one leader and one assistant, to a partly remunerated leader, until we got a completely salaried pastor. At present the trend is toward a team ministry with a moderator to lead business meetings.

The Ralph Teigrobs were the third **deacon** couple ordained here in 1970. The A. Sudermans (Sr.) and J. Klassens (Sr.) retired from active service and the P. Krahns moved away. Since then several couples have been commissioned and additional couples elected. Each couple has a list of church members for whom they pray and meet with from time to time.

Membership climbed from 131 to 213 mainly through baptism. (Largest was 20.) When Evergreen Heights Christian Fellowship, Simcoe, organized we numbered less and now it is 194. Hosting couples are elected to welcome visitors in our services.

Since our growing **Sunday School** felt the squeeze of the old church facilities most, plans to build became reality and we moved into the new church, on the same grounds, in 1958. Worship services, prior to classes, are now held by departments. The language change from German to English has also taken place. A Promotion Day highlight is each Grade two pupil receiving a Bible.



Present Leadership Committees: Rev. C. Braun, Ralph Teichroeb; Moderator: Paul Coon.

Besides our new **church building** a parsonage was built to accommodate our first pastor family in 1962. With the organization and growth of "Christian Service Brigade" and "Pioneer Girls" an education wing was added to the church. In the mid-seventies the entire sanctuary was renovated and a large foyer added. We rejoiced in God's gracious provision at a mortgage-burning ceremony on Sept. 21, 1980!

A **Christian Education Committee** was formed to coordinate the church program. The chairperson of each of these agencies is in it: Sunday School, Youth, Music, Christian Service Brigade, Pioneer Girls and Library. The first director was R. Teigrob and now it is W. Wiens.

An organ was purchased to enhance our church **music.** Our choir has changed from mainly youth singers to more adult members due to the trend of continuing studies, taking many of the youth away for most of the year. We also appreciate the ministry of song by such groups as New Life Quartet, Reimer Trio, Joyful Sounds and couple duets. A children's choir led by E. Suderman serves on occasion.

Youth work has changed from one leader to two couples, as youth sponsors, guiding the work of the youth-elected committee. Besides weekly meetings they enjoy camp-outs, sports, work-days and the annual spring banquet.

Midweek **Bible study** is still held at church, with some groups meeting in homes. A monthly German meeting is held for those who appreciate it.

Three **ladies groups** meet periodically and have an annual, joint bazaar in spring to support missions. The Christmas banquets give opportunity to invite guest couples from the community.

Two **Missions** Sunday Schools started in the 50's were discontinued when the language change came, giving them opportunity to come here. Bi-weekly services begun at Norview (county home) continue, with J. Reimers in charge at present. Association with the local ministerial has brought about community crusades, hymn-sings and a community help centre in Port Rowan. Family and children camps have gained in popularity and so the V.B.S. program was discontinued. We were happy to help a Laotian family come to Canada to enjoy the same freedoms as we have.

Amidst the many changes, may we, as well, be ... "changed into the same image (the Lord) from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (II Cor. 3: 18b)

(More significant detail may be found in the book by David Teigrob "What Mean These Stones?")



Peter Klassen, Minister Elect, Deacon, and Sunday School.



This first group of "Pioneer Girls" began with the encouragement of Rev. and Mrs. A. Block Sr.



"Young Soldiers for Christ" begun by Rev. W. Baerg was the forerunner of the C.S.B. program here. (Centre) John Hildebrand received the "Herald of Christ Award".
L - Abe Dyck (Supt.), H. Hiebert (captain). R - Wayne Topping (C.S.B. Rep.), Rev. W. Janzen (pastor) who worked extensively with community people.



50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS (1927-77) Our choir directed by P. Driedger. Front L-R: Rev. Jacob Penner Jr. (interim pastor '71-'73), Rev. Walter Janzen, pastor ('73-'78), Rev. Abram Block Sr. ('66-'71) pastor.



"Goye" is what H. Teigrobs did: Costa Rica, Nova Scotia and presently in Belize.



Margaret and Wm. Baerg came to us in 1962 and left for Africa in 1965.



Henry and Erna Hiebert | John and Susie Wall | George and Kaye Froese | Ralph and Helen Teigrob | Jake and Mary Petkau | John and Helen Reimer

LEAMINGTON M.B. CHURCH
1931 -

By C. Hamm





Pastor Art Willms 1975-81. "Leamington Post Photo"

Leamington M.B. Church, like so many other churches when they settled in Canada, met jointly with the United Mennonite Church. In 1931, the M.B. Church was organized, and in the following year, as a group of sixteen members, joined the Ontario M.B. Conference.

Services were held in various rental facilities in those early years. It was a great step forward when the church on Elliott Street was built in 1939. An addition was added to it in 1955. The present church on a larger property was begun in 1965, and that too needed to be expanded in time. Additional Sunday School rooms and a large auditorium were built in 1979.

Throughout the nearly fifty years of its existence, many members have moved to and from this area. Our membership roll stands at 503 enrolled, although the actual membership for a given year in this time fluctuated from as low as 152 in 1966 to 202 at the present time.

Leadership, too has seen changes, from the early years when there were several ministers serving alternately, to the present salaried pastor system. Rev. Isaac Thiessen, one of the first ministers of the church ordained in 1935, also became its first salaried pastor. Rev. Henry Warkentin served here next, and was followed by Rev. Abe Konrad. Our present pastor, Rev. Art Willms, has been with us since 1975, and will be leaving to pastor another church this summer. Rev. David Derksen has been faithfully serving as pastor and assistant pastor ever since he was ordained in 1943. In 1981 Pastor Willms left us and was replaced by Rev. Albert Baerg.

Sunday morning worship services are still conducted in both German and English. The German Sunday School and church services take



DEDICATION OF EDUCATION WING - 1979. In the event of publication this photo must be credited as follows "Leamington Post Photo".

place during the church's Sunday School time. Sunday School includes all ages from nursery to adult. As part of the Sunday School program, there is the annual picnic on our spacious church property, in which the whole church participates with an outdoor service and picnic lunch, as well as games and sports. A highlight for Juniors and Intermediates for the last 27 years is a weekend at a local camp in Point Pelee National Park, known as Camp Henry. Young People too enjoyed canoe trips in Algonquin Park, as well as retreats and campouts with their leaders through the years.

Pioneer Girls and boys' clubs, which attracted many from outside our church circle, were part of the program for about twelve years. These were discontinued when Family Night took their place in 1980, with programs for the entire family.

Outdoor services have been held each summer on Sunday evenings since 1973, on the adjoining mall property, beginning with four Sundays in July, and expanding to all of July and August.

Baptisms, which were formerly held at Lake Erie, are now conducted in the church baptistry. Thanksgiving and Missions services are observed each fall.

The church's thirtieth anniversary was celebrated in the Elliott Street church during Henry Warkentin's leadership.

The church has sponsored several evangelistic services with the Messengers quartet, as well as participating in area crusades conducted by Barry Moore, Marney Patterson and the Sutara Twins.

Vacation Bible School was begun in 1944. During the time when teachers came from various churches through the D.V.B.S. program of Ontario Home Missions, schools were conducted in surrounding areas, including Windsor, Wallaceburg and Pelee Island, as well as in the local church. In recent years V.B.S. has been conducted by church members in local schools and has been well attended.

Through the years there have been many faithful workers. Among them was Mr. Gerhard Willms, who was choir director for many years and instilled the love of church music in many. Mr. Daniel Boschman started working in Sunday School while the two churches were still worshipping together and continued serving into the fifties. Also in this group was Mr. Gerhard Reimer who served as Bible teacher. Erma Friesen went out from our midst as the first Christian Service worker. We are thankful that others have felt the call to go — Linda Derksen has just returned from Peru after serving three years. Phil Hamms worked in Japan for three years under Good News Corps and is preparing to go into full time mission work. Joan Whitfield is presently serving in Nepal and Ruth Schmidt is working in Fresno California under U.S. Christian Service.

Our church has been seeking to serve in the community also by bringing a daily message through Dial-A-Meditation. This service has been much appreciated for nine years. The local day care centre found they needed a temporary home till their new facilities were built, and have been using our church basement for over a year.

Every Sunday morning it is a joy to see faces in our congregation from the Third World countries, who have made Canada their new home. Laotians, who have been sponsored by people from neighbouring churches and families, as well as the family our church is looking after, come to a Sunday School Class conducted by John Konrad. John is learning to speak their language, and will leave early in May under MCC for Thailand, to become more familiar with the language and people. A Chinese group uses our facilities twice a month to conduct church services in their language. God has given us a mission field right at our door.

We are privileged to have many with the gift of song, and enjoy hearing the various duets, trios



Pioneer Girls Float - at the Leamington Centennial.

and quartets, which form and sing. One of these is a male quartet which has sung together for over 25 years, starting as a service for a radio program which the church sponsored for more than ten years.

The following is an outline of our present church program.

I. SUNDAY

A. 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for the entire family (includes a supervised nursery and classrooms for all)
10:10 a.m. German Worship Service
10:50 a.m. Morning Worship for All
7:00 p.m. Evening Service each Sunday (community groups sharing their ministry, films, special musical groups each night, preaching services, etc.)

B. 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Services in Nursing Homes every second Sunday of the month. Services are held in the Lodge & Sun Parlour Homes and include singing groups and a short message from the Word.

II. MONDAY

A. 7:30 p.m. Once a month the Women's Fellowship meets to promote Missions and for fellowship.

III. WEDNESDAY

A. 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Family Night - following "Success with Youth," materials. Children are divided into Space Cubs, Whirly Birds, Jet Cadets, Alpha Teens, Adults meet separately for Bible Study and Prayer. Activities include crafts, recreational times. Efforts are made to enhance the concept of the family and to reach unsaved families for Jesus Christ.

IV. THURSDAY

A. Choir Practice

B. Service in a Nursing Home (Mennonite Home approx. 7 times a year with singing groups & message).

V. FRIDAY

A. 7:30 p.m. Youth Program with 2 Adult couples supervising and promoting activities.

VI. SATURDAY

A. 7:30 a.m. Just initiated Men's Miss. Fellowship meeting for fellowship and to promote the work of the church.

B. 8:00 p.m. Several times during the year a separate gathering called, "Adult Fellowship," meets for fellowship and to be challenged by outside groups and speakers.

C. 8:00 p.m. College & Careers & Young Couples meet several times a year for informal inspirational gatherings.
- drama presentation

VII. OTHER ACTIVITIES

A. Church Women make some 30 - 50 quilts each year for MCC.

B. Kids For Christ choir (Juniors & Intermediates), present musical cantatas during the year. during the year.

C. A good number of members are active in a local Christian Day School, "Emmanuel Christian Academy."

D. The Church actively participates in the Leam. Ministerial Assoc., assisting in Prayer & Holy Week Services and local Crusades.

E. The Church sponsors crusades on Evangelism & Deeper Life. Generally, one strong emphasis each year.

F. During the summer months July & August, outdoor Sunday evening services are held at the Leam. Met Mall with singing and preaching in an effort to reach the community with the gospel.

G. Mennonite Disaster Committee, Home Bible League & Can. Bible Soc., representatives promote the activities of these good Christian Organizations and the Church supports them with time and money.

The Leamington Mennonite Brethren Church is a very active church. It is very conscious of Jesus' words in Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

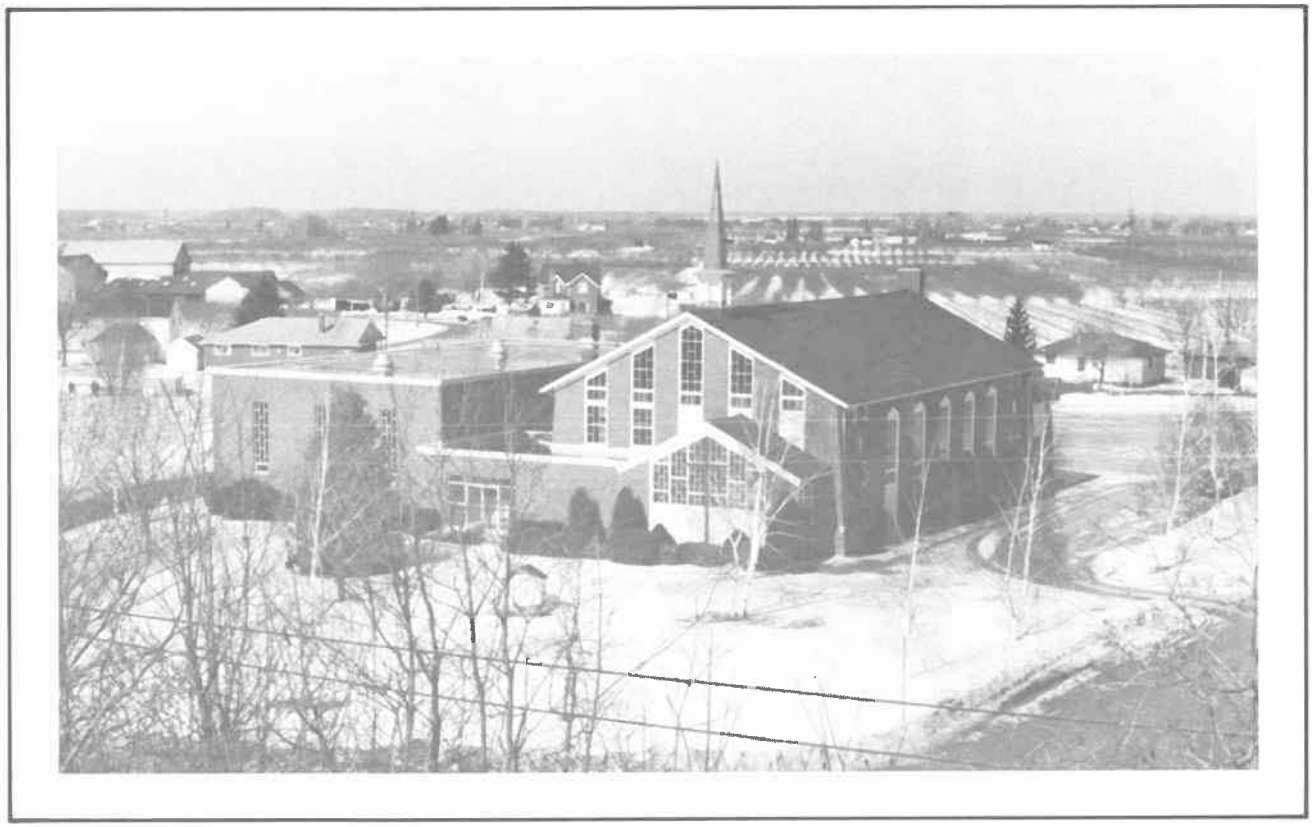
We are thankful that God has called us worthy to be channels of blessing. It is our prayer that we might be what God wants us to be.



V.B.S. 1980 at Margaret D. Dennis School.

VINELAND M.B. CHURCH
1932 -

By Henry Hubert





Pastor Gerry Ediger and wife Jennifer and family: 1981 -.

The beautiful little village of Vineland lies nestled among the rich fruitlands of the Niagara Peninsula between the cities of Hamilton and St. Catharines. It is a community which God has richly blessed in physical attractiveness and material prosperity, and it is here that our people came years ago and began their lives of work and service to God.

The history of the Vineland Mennonite Brethren Church covers almost the same period as that of the Ontario Mennonite Brethren Conference. On January 10, 1932 a handful of Mennonite Brethren formally banded together to be identified as a church. Up to that time (and even after up to the present) the Vineland Mennonite Brethren had enjoyed common fellowship with the United Mennonite folk of the area. Since that time the Vineland church has gone through a kaleidoscope of change. In a few quick turns let us view this pattern of change that has unfolded in the past five decades.

LEADERSHIP

Vineland has had thirteen changes of pastoral leadership in the past fifty years. Of that number, all but two have been discerned from within the fellowship. In 1957 the church decided to support its leader financially, part-time. In 1959 we decided we needed full-time leadership. We began in 1932 with a church council consisting of the elders of the church. Between 1956 and 1958 we experimented with a board of elders and a church council and reverted to a single leadership body. In 1956 the church elected its first moderator, freeing the pastor from leading the discussion of church business. Then in 1966 the church council was again instituted alongside the elders and in 1980 the church decided for leadership by a unitary council of elders. During this entire time the church has continued to enjoy the strength of multiple leadership with at least several brothers being ordained or commissioned to the pastoral and



The Sanctuary - Interior.

preaching ministry. At no time has this church depended solely on one designated leader.

CHURCH MISSIONS

The multiplicity of ministry within the church has also grown throughout the years. Sunday school for our children existed from the very beginning. Adult Sunday School began in 1936. A monthly youth service began in 1934 and ten years later it matured into a full youth program. Our ladies organized for service in 1935 and in 1943 the Willing Helpers began. The choir was begun in 1935 and has continued in 46 years of unbroken ministry. A young married fellowship was initiated in 1955. In 1964 a mid-week program was initiated which in 1981 evolved into a family night.

LOCAL OUTREACH

The history of our church in its outreach efforts is very interesting. In 1944 we were the spearhead of the first Mennonite Brethren Vacation Bible School mission project in the province held in the old Maple Grove School. This was followed up by another effort at Effingham in 1945. V.B.S. and then Sunday school was initiated at Stoney Creek starting in 1954. Then another more local effort was tried at Putt's Inn in 1959. 1967 saw the beginning of the work in St. Anns. Then in 1975 we were invited to hold services at the Lake and Trees Camp and we were one of the founding supporting churches of Turning Point Ministries. Then in 1977 what we now know as Camp Ararat was begun in Campden.

Note that in our fifty year history this church has birthed three separate churches. The beginning of the Virgil church in 1937 was not an outreach effort but the instances of Stoney Creek and St. Anns were the result of intentional evangelistic efforts. All three of these fellowships were started with the aid of active ministry by our members and material support. At each occasion Vineland members elected to remain permanently with the new work. It is to the credit of this church that each instance was not the result of local overcrowding or schismatic factors.

BUILDING

During these fifty years a major portion of the energy and resources of this fellowship has been used to respond to the need for improved housing. In 1937 the Victoria Avenue Church was purchased. In 1944 an addition was built. In 1946 a janitor's house was built followed by a basement addition in 1952. Then the present church was built in 1959 and the parsonage was erected in 1960. Finally the education wing was completed in 1969. In the period to 1969 we undertook a new building project on the average every five years.

LANGUAGE

We know of course that these years have

covered a period of great cultural adjustment from first generation immigrants to the beginning now of fourth generation Canadians. The most obvious symbol of this change has been language. German has been highly valued for its cultural and religious associations. A German school began in 1936 for the express purpose of protecting these associations from the threat of an English Canadian society and it continued for 27 years until 1963. The 1960's were our decade of change in this respect. In 1960 we heard our first regular Sunday morning English message. That was 22 years ago. At that point our services became bilingual. In 1963 we held our first English communion service as an experiment only. In 1965 our church business records switched to English and in 1968 the order of service was changed to a completely English Sunday morning service and we have maintained our present level of English ministry for 14 years. We are now entering a phase in which a generation is taking significant ministry and leadership in the church but has virtually no personal facility in the German language.

MEMBERSHIP

The changes in our membership also present an interesting picture. Beginning with 37 members in 1932 we grew at a very steady and rapid rate to a peak of 278 in 1952. A decline over the next three years to 255 in 1955 followed. This may be partly because of rapid growth in St. Catharines. In the period of our decline the St. Catharines church grew from 296 to 409 members. Then as the "babyboom kids" reached middle adolescence and were baptized, we grew from 255 in 1955 to 341 in 1963. This represents our maximum membership over the fifty years. This maximum may have been artificially high for it was followed by a period of very rapid decline to 301 in 1967, a net loss of 40 members in five years. The next three years saw a modest increase to 329 in 1970. The last 11 years with two minor exceptions, have been a time of decline, then stability and then decline again to our present figure of 288, a figure we have not been at since 1959, 23 years ago.

The grace of God has been evident in the history of the Vineland church. The motto which is our Jubilee theme comes from John 1: 16, "From the fullness of His grace we have received one blessing after another." This has been our experience.



Sunday School Teachers - 1982.



Sunday School Group - serving at West Lincoln Hospital.

VIRGIL M.B. CHURCH
1937 -

Helen Reimer Bergmann



Virgil Mennonite Brethren Church, corner of Field Road and Highway 55, Virgil, Ontario.



Present Virgil pastor: Front left: David Nightingale, Anne Nightingale, Mary Willms, Minister elect John Epp, Anna Epp, Youth leader John Doerksen, Judi Doerksen, Moderator: Dan Willms.

Hebrews chapter ten exhorts us to encourage one another and not neglect assembling together. This has been the policy of Mennonite believers wherever they have settled. Mennonites arrived in the Niagara-on-the-Lake area in 1934. Immediately the group, consisting of United Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren began holding Sunday Services. Mr. William Andres, the very first Mennonite settler, had purchased a large run-down farm home on Niven Road. Here they met in mild weather on the spacious yard under the trees and in inclement or cold weather, in the Andres living room.

As word spread that acreage in small farm lots was available, many more Mennonites came. In the spring of 1937 the Virgil Mennonite Brethren Church was officially organized with twenty-six charter members. The birthplace was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Dueck on Line 2. Rev. Johann F. Dick was chosen to be the first leader. Since December of the previous year the group had rented the Virgil Town Hall, corner of Creek and Stone Roads. In the fall of 1937, on the Sunday that Rev. and Mrs. Dick were to celebrate their silver wedding, the Town Hall was completely destroyed by fire. A new premise was found a few yards distant in the Baptist Church on Creek Road.

With the influx of new members from Saskatchewan and Manitoba plans were made for a church building. On October 15, 1940, a sod turning ceremony was held on property acquired on the corner of Stone Road (Highway 55) and Field Road. Mr. John Kliewer supervised the building which was done completely on a voluntary basis. In spring, 1941, the Virgil M.B. Church was dedicated.

Postwar immigration from Europe and South America led to further congregational expansion.



John G. and Martha Baerg, Pastor 1958-75.

By the early fifties the membership had grown to well over four hundred. Enlargement of the edifice and provision of Sunday School rooms in the basement were completed in spring of 1952.

In 1961 a two storey educational structure was added to the main building at the far end of the north side. These facilities were an invaluable asset not only to Sunday School but also to Wednesday night activities and German language instruction.

Discussion on whether to build a new church or do extensive renovations was taken up in the late sixties. At the same time, variations of opinion came up regarding the German language. Different forms of services were tried in an attempt to alleviate the situation. Nevertheless, on December 31, 1970 a group of members bade farewell to begin a fellowship using the English language. The Orchard Park Bible Church of the Mennonite Brethren was subsequently formed.

Excavation for a new addition to the rear of the church was begun in spring, 1972. The upstairs provided a youth room, library and pastor's study. Downstairs were a modern kitchen, furnace room and washrooms. That summer the old basement was completely renovated to form a large lower auditorium adjacent to the new kitchen. In late fall, work was begun on a spacious foyer to the main church entrance. A service on July 1, 1973 expressed thankfulness for completion of additions and renovations.

Leadership

Rev. Johann F. Dick was leader for the first several years. From 1940 to 1943 a group of five brethren formed a leadership committee. For the next two years Rev. Dietrich J. Klassen undertook the leadership. Rev. Johann D. Penner and Rev. Jacob P. Dyck each served for six years. The former from 1945 to 1951. After Rev. Dyck's resignation in 1957 the congregation sensed the need for a full time pastor. With joy the John G. Baerg family was welcomed in August, 1958.

The newly acquired parsonage bordering onto the church property soon bustled with activity as seven family members settled in. For almost eighteen years Rev. Baerg faithfully shepherded the Virgil fellowship. With mixed emotions church members as well as friends from neighbouring churches came for a farewell service on April 11, 1976. On Good Friday, April 16 the church family gathered for a supper to bid good-bye to a family that had become a part of the Virgil congregation.

Rev. Baerg's transfer to Clearbrook, B.C. was made easier for him in the knowledge that Rev. Abe Quiring would be coming in August. In the interim John I. Klassen served as leader before leaving for seminary in Fresno. The Quirings come from Winnipeg and soon became acquainted with Ontario weather and ways! A sorrowful congregation learned of Rev. Quiring's plans to return to Winnipeg as of April, 1980.

Ben P. Falk, who had served as assistant pastor, now carried on with the help of Rev. William G. Baerg. Because 36% of the 250 members are over 65 years of age, Virgil is a bilingual congregation. (Statistics as of May 3, 1981). The search for a new pastor seemed difficult. Once again the Lord answered prayer as the David Nightingales came from Fresno, California the end of June, 1980.

How has the church influenced the community? In the early forties, Sunday Schools were conducted in Niagara-on-the-Lake and Queenston. After a time, a chapel was erected on Progressive Avenue. On June 6, 1954 Sunday School and worship services began in the Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel. Vacation Bible School has been held every summer. At present the Virgil Public School is being used for two weeks during vacation time.

In 1949 a weekly radio program "Moments of Blessing" was begun. Till November, 1962 it was aired over CHVC (now CJRN), Niagara Falls, Ontario. For seven years Herman Kroeker directed the program. A male quartet - forerunner of "Global Messengers" - provided excellent music. A German radio program "Wort des Lebens" (Word of Life) was begun early in 1956 and aired over the same station. Cornelius Sawatzky directed these broad-



Deacons and Deaconesses of Virgil M.B. Church: Henry (standing) and Hedy (seated) Winter, Mary Neufeld, Katharina Neufeld, Maria (seated) and Henry (standing) Janzen, Ben and Erna Falk, John and Nellie Voth, Henry and Elizabeth Dyck, Helen and Walter Bergmann.



Anne and Abe Quiring, Virgil M.B. Pastor 1976-1980.



Virgil M.B. members who were present before 1940 when church originated or was in early stages. Back row: Peter and Helen (Dueck) Fast, Helen (Huebner) Neufeld, Mary (Dick) and Jake Kaethler. 2nd row: Cornelius C. Heide, Sara and Helen Steingard, Maria and Ben Falk. Seated: Peter Reimer, Elizabeth Unger, Louise Wichert, Agatha Wiebe, Betty (Steingard) Loewen, Susa Friesen, Elly (Thielmann) and Abram Redekopp. Missing are Peter Kliewer and Mrs. Margaret Dyck and daughter Alma.

casts until they were discontinued in March, 1966.

Christian Service Boys' Brigade was initiated December, 1958. These were held at the gymnasium of Eden Christian College. There were a good number of boys from the community as well as from church families. This work was discontinued in May, 1979. Pioneer Girls' was begun in 1965. Besides serving girls of different ages from the Virgil Sunday School, many girls from the community attended. Due to a declining enrolment, Virgil joined forces with the Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel in the fall of 1978.

Since 1973 New Testaments are being placed in many area hotels and motels in cooperation with the Home Bible League. Once a month, an evening service is conducted at Linhaven, a government senior citizens complex in St. Catharines. This began November, 1977. Farther afield, Olga Dick has been serving at La Bessonnaz, Switzerland, since September, 1968. Many children and young people have been ministered to at this camp over the years. William G. Baergs have twice been back to Zaire on short terms after joining the Virgil Church in early spring, 1978. Theo Enns' left for Senegal, West Africa, June 1980, to serve under New Tribes Mission.

Many of the pioneers who laboured when the church began are no longer with us. However, the process of encouraging and assembling together continues in Sunday School, young peoples, ladies' groups, Bible studies and in regular worship services.



William G. and Margaret Baerg, veteran Zairian missionaries and Virgil M.B. minister. Aaron, Martha, Heidi and Theo Enns to Senegal, W. Africa, July, 1980 under New Tribes Mission.



Miss Olga Dick, serving in La Bessonnaz, Switzerland since 1968.

SCOTT ST. M.B. CHURCH
1943 -

John Klippenstein





Pastor Henry Penner & wife Lydia: 1953-73: 1977 -.

Looking back over the past 39 years of the Scott Street Mennonite Brethren Church, we are reminded of the words of the Lord in Matthew 16: 18, "I will build my church." Since its inception in 1943, it has experienced a constant growth. Twice it has outgrown its facilities. This is the Lord's doing. The following breakdown shows the development:

- St. Catharines Mennonite Brethren founded on October 17, 1943 with 66 charter members.
- First meeting place (rented premises) 19 Queen St., 1943-1945.
- Moved to second rental premises 36 James St., 1945-1949.
- June 26, 1949 moved to own church building on Carlton St., — 151 members.
- December 12, 1954 moved to new church on Scott St., — 388 members.
- In ten years, from 1954-1964, the membership had increased to 598.
- 1964 — Fairview M.B. Church was formed by way of division with 157 members.
- From 1964-1973 membership had grown to 633.
- 1973 — Grantham M.B. Church was formed with a membership of 229 leaving the mother church was 404 members.
- Present membership stands at about 480 members.

Touching on the aspect of shepherding the flock, we recognize with gratitude to the Lord that He provided the Scott Street Mennonite Brethren Church with the needed workers to evangelize, nurture, give direction and lead to maturity in faith and service in the Kingdom of God, Eph. 4: 11-12, 1 Peter 5: 8, as the following list presents:

Pastors:
1943-1945 Gerhard Epp
1946-1949 Heinrich H. Janzen
1949-1953 Gerhard Epp
1953-1973 Henry Penner
1973-1976 Abram J. Block
1977-Present Henry Penner

Assistant Pastors:
1943-1946 Heinrich P. Friesen
1946-1947 David Goertzen
1952-1961 Abram H. Redekop
1962-1966 Abram J. Block
1967-1973 Peter J. Dick
1973-1974 Edwin Dyck
1975 Edwin Dyck
1977-1979 Abram J. Block
1980-Present Edwin Dyck

As the Lord blessed the congregation, more avenues of various types of services opened up to meet the social and spiritual needs in the community.

The ladies groups endeavour to support foreign and home missions as they share in fellowship around the Word of God to recognize the Lord's will for their responsibilities.

The Sunday School in its manifold endeavours strengthens the principle of family unity, church unity and church growth.

Young Peoples, Boys Brigade and Pioneer Girls provide avenues of outreach in broadcasting the Good news through personal work and various fellowship and recreational arrangements to befriend such as are outside of the Christian fold.

A very special item in the church program was the Glorious Gospel Broadcast from 1951-1967.

Baptismal services were held at the beaches of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Port Dalhousie until adequate facilities were made available in the church building.

Tabor Manor, our Conference home for the aged, built next to our church grounds, has benefitted much through the transmission of worship services via P.A. system for those unable to attend services in their home church.

Missionaries & M.C.C. Workers

(Dates indicate appointment)

John & Hedwig Enns - New Tribes - Brazil - 1958.

John & Mary Unger - Home Missions - Hamilton - 1958.

Margaret Dyck - M.C.C. - Israel - 1958.

Mrs. Albert Enns - M.C.C. - Paraguay - 1959.

Hilda Martens - M.C.C. - Newton, Kansas - 1964.

Selma Thiessen - M.C.C. - India - 1966.

Lydia Martens - M.B. Service - Brazil - 1967.

Helene Boldt - Grace U. Missions - Switzerland - 1967.

Laura Warkentin - M.B. Christian Service - Newton - 1968.

Mr. & Mrs. Hugo Wiens - M.B. Christian Service - Lincoln Neb. - 1968.

Hilda Fast - M.B. Christian Service - Colombia - 1968.

Margaret Wiebe - M.B. Christian Service - Ohio - 1968.

John & Lydia Boldt - M.B. Missions - Brazil - 1971.

Peter & Lydia Janzen - M.B. Missions - Brazil - 1980.



Baptism of 30 young people: 1970.

The Scott St. Church has been greatly blessed over the years by members who in faith and devotion have served at home & abroad!



Peter & Lydia Janzen, Brazil: 1980 -.



John & Lydia Boldt and family: Brazil, 1971 -.



Edwin and Elsa Dyck: Assistant Pastor 1973-77: 1980 -.



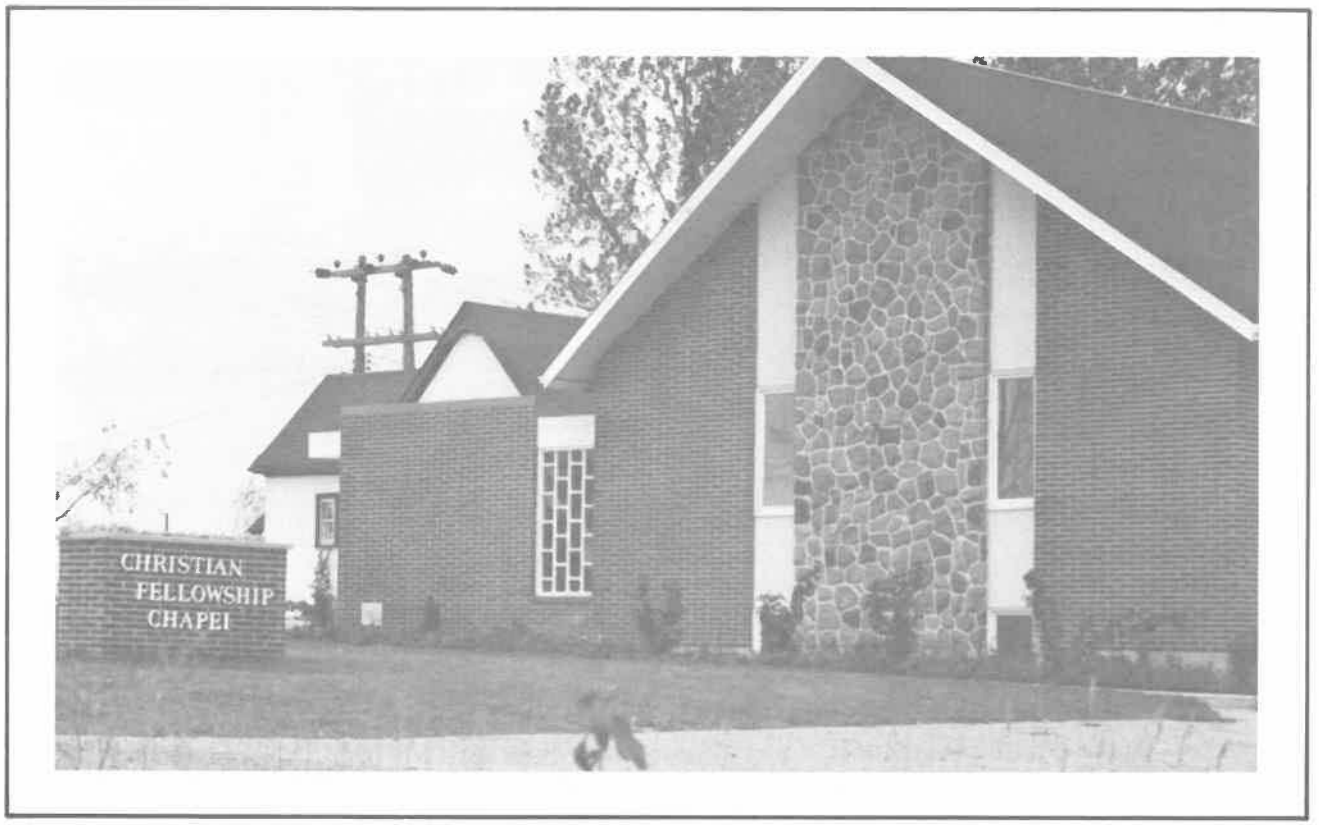
Abram and Elizabeth Block, Pastor 1973-76: Assistant Pastor 1962-66: 1977-79.



The Glorious Gospel Radio Broadcast: 1951-1967.

THE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHAPEL - HAMPSHIRE 1944 -

By Peter Klassen





Pastor Peter Klassen & wife Betty and family: 1967 - 1981.

The Christian Fellowship Chapel had its beginning in 1944, when a handful of believers in the small rural community of Hampshire, near Orillia, Ontario, officially seceded from the United Church of Canada, stating their conviction that the denomination had largely forsaken the cause of spiritual redemption for the individual, and had substituted outward reformation and social improvement instead.

This small group met in homes for a number of years, largely under lay leadership. Four young men served as student pastors for one summer each - three from Toronto Baptist Seminary, and one from Prairie Bible Institute, Three Hills, Alberta.

In the late 1940's, the Hampshire group came in contact with the Mennonite Brethren Church through its V.B.S. workers. This led eventually to acquaintance and fellowship with Rev. Henry H. Dick, who had been sent to the nearby Coldwater area under the Home Missions Board. In 1951, Rev. Dick was invited to assume the pastoral responsibilities for the group, and in 1952 a small chapel building was opened.

Four pastors have served over the years: Rev. Henry H. Dick, Jan. 1951 - March, 1954; Rev. John B. Epp, April 1954 - August 1957; Rev. Herman Kroeker, September 1957 - June 1967; and Rev. Peter J. Klassen, July 1967 to 1981. The present pastor is Phil Hamm, who with wife Lydia and their family came here in 1981.

The congregation was organized into membership as a Mennonite Brethren Church in 1961. Growth and progress were steady in the following years, and a new church building was opened in 1972, the older structure being retained for Sunday School classrooms.



Fellowship Chapel: The original building. 1952-1972. Presently a S.S. building.

In 1976, the Hampshire congregation graduated from Home Mission status to that of a financially-independent M.B. Church. The present membership is 67.

Present-day activities include the usual Sunday services; mid-week prayer groups in the church, in Orillia, and in one of the homes of the community; varied young people's activities; a ladies group, the Good Neighbor Club, which meets every second week, alternating with ladies' Bible studies; annual meetings for committee reports and elections, and quarterly business meetings; and summer Vacation Bible School. A missionary conference is usually held each year.

With new homes being built along the concessions and sideroads, and the Silver Creek trailer park, with dozens of children, only a few miles from the church, there are urgent opportunities for visitation and evangelism. With thirty years of history behind, the Hampshire church needs the prayers of the Conference as never before. "There is a wide open door ... to preach and teach here. So much is happening, but there are many enemies." 1 Cor. 16:9, LB.



June 4, 1978 - Hampshire's largest baptism: A Historic Day!



Pastor John and Kay Epp: 1954-1957 and son, Ken.

The Kroeker family:
1960. Pastor from 1957-67.





V.B.S. in Coldwater: Summer of 1960:
Teacher at right - Ernie Kaethler of Kitchener.

THE NIAGARA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHAPEL
1951 -
By Peter Neufeld





Pastor Gus Quadrizius and wife Hilde: 1978 -.

FOUNDING

The Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel, located in rural Niagara-on-the-Lake, originated as a mission Sunday School outreach of a small group of Virgil Mennonite Brethren members. C.M. Penner, Jake Froese and Walter Bergmann formed a Committee whose leadership culminated in the operation, a Sunday School conducted on Sunday afternoons by volunteers from the Virgil Church. Both Niagara-on-the-Lake and the village of Queenston served as Sunday School locations with the initial service being held in November 1951.

The work in the Queenston area prospered especially with various facilities being utilized. The Brethren Ernest Dyck and Harvey Gossen were instrumental in establishing and maintaining the work here.

The donation of a building lot by John Isaac stimulated expansion. A St. Catharines Roman Catholic Church was dismantled and moved onto the site prepared to receive it. On May 30, 1954, the Chapel Building was dedicated with D.H. Neuman serving as guest speaker. C.M. Penner became its first leader. A Sunday School of 125 pupils was taught by 16 teachers.

AN INDEPENDENT CHURCH

The mission church was characterized by a strong emphasis both in Sunday School and in the Young People's organization. Frequent neighbourhood canvassing resulted in growth and the provision of transportation for everyone was characteristic.

The Virgil M.B. Church contributed workers, finances and prayer support. By 1957 the flourishing congregation felt it could maintain itself. At this



Front entrance before expansion in 1969.

time there were 26 baptized believers with no denominational affiliation and 31 Virgil M.B. members.

The Ontario conference approved the proposed organization and welcomed the Chapel as a Conference member on November 2, 1957. Br. Jacob Pankratz served as a leader at this time.



Young People's Annual Retreat.

LEADERSHIP

The energy and enthusiasm of a working membership resulted in continued growth. Vacation Bible School was a visible promotion with the highest enrollment reading 355 in 1957. A growing Sunday School and membership necessitated building expansion in 1957, 1965 and 1969.

Our first full time pastor, Ed Bauman assumed his responsibilities in October of 1960 and continued for three years.

Br. Jake Neufeld continued in the full time pastorate until Rudy Bartel assumed the position on a part time basis in 1967.

Br. Peter Loewen, return missionary from Columbia, S.A. began a full time ministry in September 1974. Currently Br. Gus Quadrizius is our pastor having begun the work in the summer of 1978.

Our congregation is grateful for the dedicated ministry of all these brethren. Under their leadership the Word was expounded faithfully and the many church programs were fostered.

CHURCH PROGRAMS

Sunday School and Young Peoples' work have always received a strong emphasis. As the church flourished, expansion into Vacation Bible School, Pioneer Girls and Junior Church occurred as did the organization of Adult Fellowship, Ladies' Prayer Band, and various other activity groups.

A natural extension of this outreach-oriented congregation is support of and participation in missions at various times. Through the years the church has endorsed the work of the Jacob Pankratz' in Montreal, Peter and Betty Hamm in India, Art and Hilda Froese in Germany and Elsie Kroeker in Mexico. Currently we support Herta Voth in Panama and John and Irene Harsemma, Ecuador, now going to New Guinea, the Henry Hubert's abroad, and the Peter Loewens in Columbia.

Currently we are sponsoring and supporting a Laotian woman with her six children.

CONCLUSION

The Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel has been a vital influence in our area. Its ministry has touched thousands of children, young people and adults whose contact with the gospel was minimal. It provided an opportunity for Mennonite Brethren to become involved in evangelism and thus broadened our scope and horizons.

While we benefitted from our pastoral ministry, these brethren also received valuable training and have gone on to serve larger congregations.

At the time of writing our numbers, in terms of Sunday School enrollment have declined. A maturing population and fewer births are the major factors. Nonetheless, we continue to experience a strong pulpit ministry and a high degree of involvement of our one hundred members.

We praise God for His sustaining strength these thirty years and we look forward to continued worship and fellowship under His Leadership.

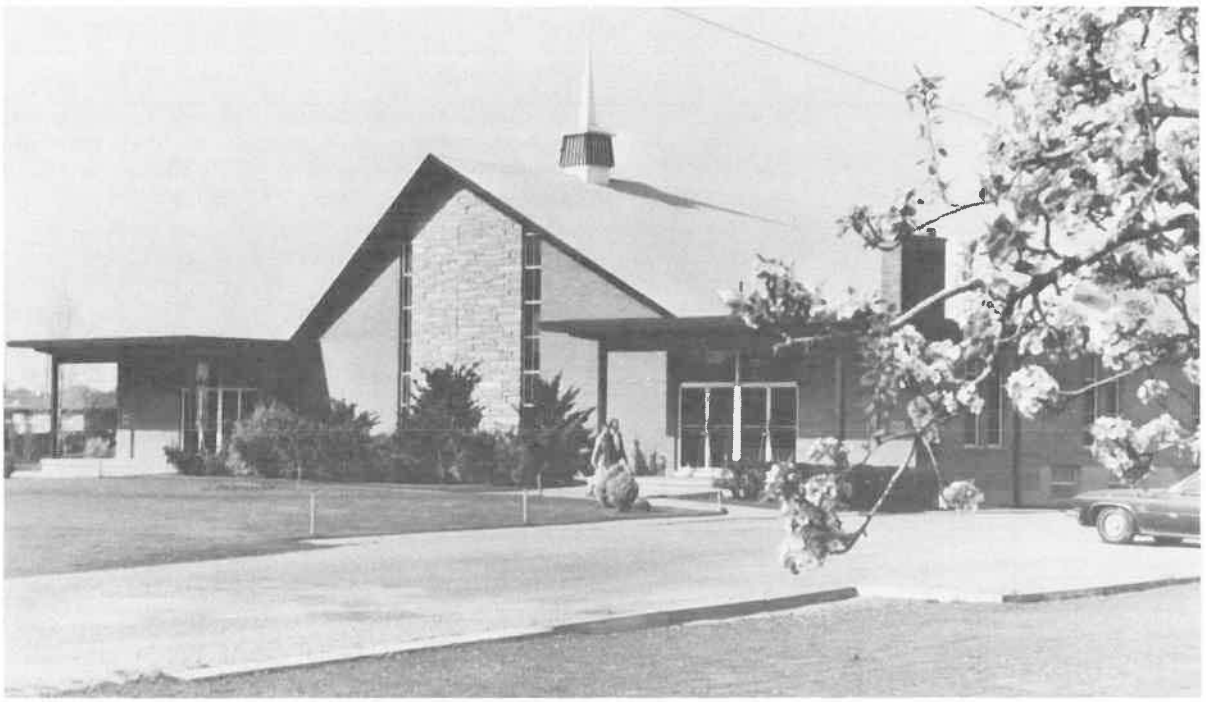


Laotian Refugee - sponsored by our chapel.



Peter and Eva Loewen and children, Karen, Theodore and Timothy. Colombia.

THE FAIRVIEW M.B. CHURCH
1954 -
By Rudy Friesen



Recently appointed Pastor: Ed Wiebe & wife Ruth, also recently appointed Assistant Pastor: Paul Wartman and wife Ruth Ann.



Pastor 1975 - 1981: Rudy Bartel and wife Irene and family.

Seventeen years ago 156 members of the Scott St. M.B. Church, St. Catharines, signed a charter to form a new congregation. They moved into the building at 455 Geneva St. erected by the Scott St. congregation when the need for expansion became a pressing problem.

In ten years the membership of the Fairview Mennonite Brethren Church had shot up to 380. 126 believers were baptized during this time. Harvey C. Gossen commenced pastoral responsibilities in October, 1964 after Wally Unger had led the group in the crucial first few months. Wally continued on as part-time assistant pastor until the summer of 1968.

Officially opened and dedicated February 16, 1964 the church building underwent further expansion in 1968. Approximately 7,000 square feet were added, including a gymnasium. This greatly enhanced the work of Pioneer Girls, Christian Service Brigade and the Sunday school. The clubs had become an important outreach into the community. Sunday school attendance reached a high of 379 with over 500 enrolled. Sunday morning service attendance averaged about 625.

First started in 1966, the Sunday evening summer drive-in services on the parking lot of the Fairview Mall became an annual event.

The dial-a-meditation telephone service, begun in January 1969, the first such service in the city at that time, recorded an astounding 63,000 calls by the end of the year. It remained a viable witness to the community for some years. Gradually interest declined and it was terminated in 1978.

Paul Fast was elected as part-time assistant pastor in Feb., 1970. He served until September, 1975 when he left for seminary studies.

Paul took on added responsibility when Fairview's beloved pastor Harvey Gossen passed on to glory suddenly, of a heart attack on Dec. 29, 1974. Over 1,000 people crowded into the church for the funeral on January 2, 1975.

Just four months later Rudy F. Bartel began his service as pastor. In September of the same year, 1975, the first church family retreat at the Fairhavens Bible Conference grounds took place. It too, has become an annual event.

Ron Voth, a graduate of the M.B. Biblical Seminary, became Fairview's first full-time assistant pastor in August, 1976. He served in this capacity until September, 1980. He gave dedicated leadership especially in the area of youth ministries.

In 1977 the leadership of the church became more actively involved in giving direction to home Bible studies. More and more such groups were forming until presently some fourteen homes are open to Bible studies weekly or bi-weekly. New Christians from a variety of backgrounds, on being baptized and on joining the church gave evidence of spiritual help through such study groups.

A further service to the community began in February, 1978 with the opening of the Fairview Nursery School. It operates with an enrollment of some 40 children on a five, three or two day a week basis. Two full-time teachers are engaged and others help on a voluntary basis.

June, 1979 saw the start of a two week day-camp program for boys and girls in grades 3-6. Children were bused to a campsite daily for crafts, swimming, sports and Bible instruction. A total of 61 children attended in 1980 with over half the registrations coming from outside the Fairview church family. This program was repeated in 1981. 1981.



Pastor Ruby Bartel and Assistant Pastor Ron Voth, 1976-1980.



L.: Pastor Harvey C. Gossen, 1964-1974; C.: Paul Fast - Ass't. Pastor, 1970-1975; R.: Wally Unger - Interim Leader and Ass't. Pastor, 1964-1968; at Tenth Anniversary Celebration, February 9, 10, 1974.

Interest in missions and services (including M.C.C.) is maintained in weekly "minute for missions" Sunday morning reports and through annual missions conferences. Two young couples have served in the Good News Corps program in South America and presently two Fairview members are serving under World Impact, one in Wichita, Kansas and the other in Fresno, California. Two other families have served in Africa on teaching assignments under M.C.C.

The decline of enrollment in St. Catharines area public schools is also reflected, to some extent at least, in an overall drop in Sunday school and boys and girls club enrollment at Fairview. The adult department, however, maintains a good attendance in the study of God's Word every Sunday.

Church membership reached a high of 425 in 1979. Supporting the formation of the new Fairview-Louth M.B. Community Church, Fairview transferred 15 of its members (7 families and one widow) over to the new congregation in January, 1980.

A ministry in missions, evangelism and deeper life have brought many outstanding speakers to Fairview's pulpit over the years. Names like F.C. Peters, J.J. Toews, Ralph Bell, Louis Paul Lehman, Doug Percy, J.B. Toews, Elwyn Davies, G.W. Peters, Victor Adrian, Keith Price, and George Shillington come to mind. All have supplemented the pastors' and assistant pastors' effective, uncompromising proclamation of the fact "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures". (1 Cor. 15: 3b-4).

Pioneer Girls: L. to R.: Joan Balzer, Explorer Division Guide - presenting the three highest awards to Lynn Thiessen, centre. On right Mary Epp, representative. 1974. In the same year, 1974, Myrna Voth received her Wing Guide and Wing Explorer. Fairview's Christian Service Brigade program has also produced three Heralds of Christ: Bill Carlson (1975), Doug Peters (1976), and Harry Vandermeer (1976).



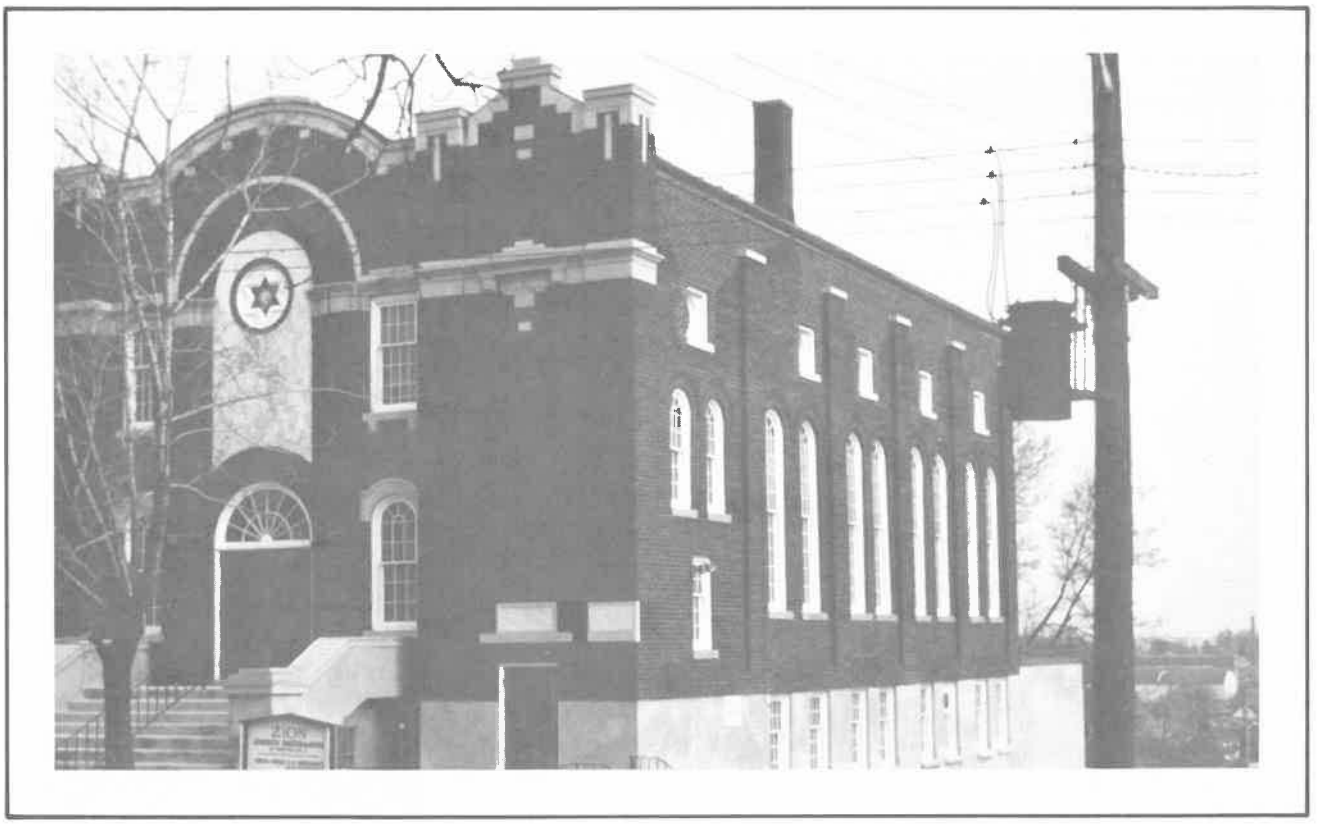
"The Messengers" Quartet at outdoor service.

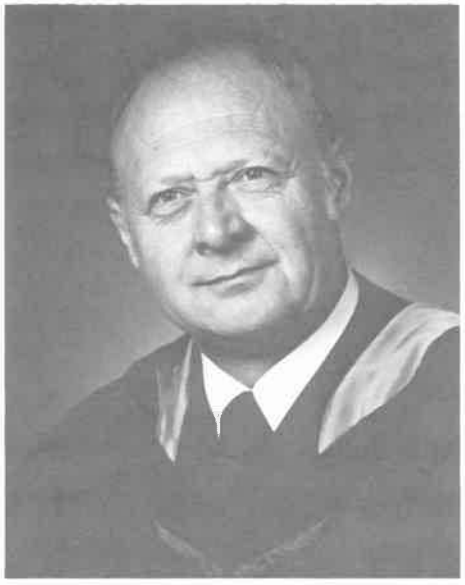


Ron Voth - Ass't. Pastor and young people.

ZION M.B. CHURCH
1961 -

By Rudy Janzen





Pastor - Rudy Janzen, 1978 -.

On February 26, 1961 approximately 35 Mennonite Brethren believers gathered in the third story hall at 64 King Street East in Kitchener to formalize their intention "to form an all-German congregation for the purpose of continuing mission work among German-speaking immigrants". They elected Rev. Isaak Ewert as moderator and first pastor and Rev. Franz Janzen as his assistant. Wilhelm Jantzen, and then Art Goertz became treasurer, Gerhard Schierling secretary, and Kornelius Penner choir leader. Other council members were deacon Kornelius Goertz, Jakob Schwarz, Peter Wiens and Viktor Zieske Sr.

By March 19th, the charter membership had risen to 48, and the name chosen, according to Isaiah 14:32b, was the "Zion Mennonite Brethren Church of Kitchener". With the growing Sunday School Anne Wiebe became Superintendent, Helen Wiebe (now Mrs. P. Rempel) Youth Leader, Frank Janzen leader of the enlarged choir, and Mrs. J. Elise Schwarz head of the Maria-Martha Ladies "Verein". By summer's end they were able to buy the stately structure at 91 Madison Ave. South, - the former synagogue in the centre of Kitchener, with several council members underwriting the mortgage arrangements of the $52,000. purchase. On October 22nd, 1961 the Dedication of the renovated building was celebrated with Rev. H.H. Wiebe of Vineland as guest speaker.

With the coming of numerous immigrants from Brazil and Paraguay, in the early sixties, the 450 seat auditorium was soon filled to near capacity on Sundays and the 61 member congregation repeated its requests for acceptance in the Ontario M.B. Conference in the years 1962 and 1963. After considerable negotiation they were received into the Ontario and Canadian Conferences in 1964, and in the following year they took on the mission support



L. to R.: The Franz Janzens - Ass't. Pastor, 1961-1971; The Isaak Ewerts, Pastor, 1961-1977; The Johann Schulzes, Ass't. Pastor, 1971-1981: at the occasion of The F. Janzens 25 years of service: 1971.

for Missionary Christel Schimmler, working in Bolivia. She served faithfully until her sudden death in March, 1980 while undergoing surgery in Germany. The church grew, with several baptisms, reaching a peak membership of 114 in 1973, shortly after they celebrated their 10th Anniversary in July, 1971, with Rev. C.C. Peters as guest speaker. When the ministers, Rev. Peter Klassen and Rev. Franz Janzen moved away the church ordained Johann Schulz, who became assistant leader until 1980. Rev. I. Ewert retired as pastor in 1977.

With numerous families moving on to the St. Catharines area and B.C., and young people preferring English, the membership slipped to the nineties, and the Sunday School instruction was switched to English. In 1978 the congregation made an almost unanimous decision to call an outside pastor, who would serve a bilingual church. Rev. Rudy H. Janzen was called, and a discipling program was begun, with younger brethren helping in the English messages and in community outreach. An English Home Bible Study night was initiated to complement the existing Wednesday German Bible Study, the sanctuary was renovated to accommodate an English Adult Sunday School class and a baby room in the balcony, a telephone counseling and outreach service was begun, the Vacation Bible School was extended to serve neighbourhood children, a Sunday Family Night informal program was initiated to reach non-church community people, and eventually the Sunday morning service at 11 a.m. became all English, with a separate German "Andacht" at 10 a.m., during the time of the English Sunday School. An English Ladies' Fellowship has also been formed. Uniquely, both pastors' wives served as organists.

The membership grew a little again and the mortgage debt was liquidated in 1980. The church is ready to expand in its witness for Christ in an area of English, Portuguese and German background, and with its affiliation in the K-W German Evangelical Alliance and K-W English Evangelical Ministerium associations.



Baptism - 1980: Pastor R. Janzen, centre - Moderator Art Goertz, 1980, lower right.



Pastor R. Janzen and wife Erica, centre couple; L. - David and Kathy MacNamara (daughter & husband); R. - David & Lynn Janzen (son & wife) 1977.



Zion M.B. Church Float: Sunday School 200th Anniversary Parade - Kitchener - 1980.



Church interior - formerly a synagogue.

WATERLOO M.B. CHURCH
1967 -
By Vic Hiebert



Pastor Marvin Warkentin & wife Karen (1976 -) before new church completed in 1973.



Pastor Al Enns and wife Sue and family: 1967-1975.

The idea of a work in Waterloo was first conceived in the Educational Committee of the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church in the spring of 1960. That August numerous young people and some young couples conducted a census at over eighteen hundred (1800) homes in two school areas of Waterloo, and a summary of the results was brought to the Kitchener Church Board for approval.

At an Educational Committee meeting on October 22, 1960, Vic Hiebert was appointed to lead the work. The committee moved that the Scottdale Press material with the M.B. imprint be used and that the name of the Sunday School be the "Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Sunday School".

With approval granted the staff was organized, a canvass of the prospects carried out and the Sunday School officially opened its doors on November 13, 1960. Thus the work was born with an initial enrollment of 5.

The classes were held at 9:15 a.m. for one hour allowing time for the teachers to travel to Kitchener for the regular worship service there at 10:40 a.m. The auditorium and two classrooms at Brighton School were rented for $15.00 per week from the City of Waterloo Public School Board.

In February, 1961, the enrollment had increased to seven. Permission to place a sign in front of the school from Saturday noon until Sunday noon was granted. In March, five more pupils joined and the third class was formed. A Mother's Day program was planned in April, providing another opportunity for parental contact.

In June, attendance began to decline and it was decided to discontinue the classes during the summer. After personally inviting the pupils back in fall and engaging in more canvassing the enrollment increased to nineteen.

In October, the Education Committee agreed to conducting monthly family worship services in Waterloo on a trial basis for several months. Parents were personally invited to each service by the leader and left with a bulletin a few days before the meeting. Usually about five parents attended and were joined by other members of the Kitchener Church who lived in Waterloo. Rev. Wilmer Kornelson, principal of the Ontario Bible School was usually the speaker. Sometimes Rev. John Boldt, who also taught in the Bible School and had a beautiful tenor voice would add to the service with his singing.

About this time, it was felt that the Scottdale Press material was too difficult for the pupils and so a change was made to the Scripture Press material. Enrollment had increased to twenty-five.

In the spring of 1963, the "Waterloo Mission Sunday School Study Committee" was formed. Its members were Wm. J. Schmidt, chairman; Henry H. Dueck, secretary; Wilmer Kornelson, Peter Rempel and Vic Hiebert. At its first meeting on April 30 they discussed how a church in Waterloo would affect the Kitchener Church, and how it would affect the Mission S.S. in Waterloo.

After the summer recess in 1963, it was suggested we start an adult S.S. class with John Boldt to teach it. This eventually had a great impact on the work in Waterloo, in that of the 3 or 4 mothers of S.S. pupils who attended two of them became Christians.

The S.S. enrollment almost reached thirty that year and the monthly worship services continued at about the same number. Then in 1964, it was decided to have weekly worship services at Brighton and several families agreed to come there regularly. It also meant that they would bring their children to the S.S. and attend the adult classes. This increase in numbers changed the work in Waterloo. The leader was now the S.S. superintendent and Arnold Baerg was appointed chairman of a committee to oversee and lead the work.

In spite of the many seemingly positive aspects of having a strong nucleus of M.B. members attending regularly, the attendance of pupils from the community slowly decreased and some of the parents who usually came to the monthly worship service did not attend the weekly services.

During the next three years the speakers for the worship services were drawn from college students, teachers and local or visiting pastors. A choir was soon organized and later on a junior choir was also formed. Later on the Kitchener Church agreed to having a part time pastor for the Waterloo work if one could be found.

In 1966 at a full membership meeting the Kitchener congregation decided to cut the apron strings and arranged for the organization as an independent church.

Thus, on January 1, 1967, the "Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church" began with 43 charter members. Frank C. Peters conducted the organizational meeting on January 8th assisted by Henry H. Dueck. The motto chosen by the new church is found in John 10: 10, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly."

In June of the same year Alvin Enns assumed the pastorate on a part time basis, also filling the position of chaplain for M.B. students, for the Ontario Conference of M.B. Churches. The congregation asked that he consider the task to be similar to that of a coach, guiding the group in their witness.

The first baptism was conducted on October 29, 1967 in the Kitchener M.B. Church.

During these years the church struggled with several issues relative to the direction in which the congregation would work. Should the church join the Ontario Conference? Should they keep the word Mennonite in their title? What about church membership lists? Should they construct a church building? Should they formulate a constitution? Should they have deacons or should all members be responsible for the caring work? Mostly the traditional way was accepted yet a friendly atmosphere developed and an openness prevailed which resulted in good relationships among the members and adherents.

On a Sunday afternoon in June of 1972 the congregation gathered to break ground at 245 Lexington Road, a one hectare site purchased by the Kitchener Church in 1964 as a building site for Waterloo. In April of the next year they began their services and activities in the new facilities. One of the purposes of the building was to have the facilities available for community efforts, such as a nursery day care centre. However to date, the building has been extended for use only to Pioneer Girls, Boys Brigade and Vacation Bible School.

After Al Enns concluded 8 years serving the congregation he left for a teaching position at Bethany Bible Institute in Saskatchewan. For one year the moderator, John Redekop, also served as interim pastor until July of 1976 when Marvin Warkentin arrived from our conference seminary in California, U.S.A.

The membership now stands at 120. Sunday School attendance has reached 135.



Original site of Waterloo Church - The A.B. Caya Farm - purchased for the development of the church by the Kitchener M.B. Church in 1964. One hectare of land was the size - on Lexington Road.



Typical of congregational photos taken while still meeting at Brighton School - 1971.

ORCHARD PARK BIBLE CHURCH: Mennonite Brethren
1971 -

By Edith Wichert





Lord Mayor Wilbert Dick welcoming Governor General Ed Schreyer & his wife Lily, Sept. 25/81.

Having roots in the Virgil M.B. Church, 99 charter members of a new fellowship soon to be named Orchard Park Bible Church of the Mennonite Brethren, launched out on January 1, 1971 with an enthusiastic vision to witness and spread the Gospel in our immediate surroundings. God blessed our desire and souls were added to the church. Our leader in those formative years 1971-1973 was Brother Victor Loewen. Eternity will someday reveal the tireless dedication and countless hours spent in the Lord's work by our brother and others, who shared in the pulpit ministry in the absence of a pastor.

We met for worship in Eden Christian College and almost from the outset, wheels were set in motion to have a building of our own. A real highlight occurred in August 1973 with the arrival of the Herman Kroekers, our first pastor. God richly blessed his ministry among us for 6 years. Brother Kroeker had a real concern for the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and exemplified this by literally knocking on doors.

In May 1974 we celebrated the sod-turning ceremony for our new sanctuary. Our building program which lasted only a year can be compared to the building of the wall of Jerusalem in Nehemiah's day where



Governor General Ed Schreyer addressing Orchard Park Church. Pastor Ernie Dyck on far left on platform.



Dedication of Orchard Park Church.



First wedding in Orchard Park Church building April 12/75. The couple are Joan Goertz and Bruce Peters.



Sod turning Ceremony for Orchard Park in Spring '74.

the Bible says, "and next to him stood ... and next to him stood" With a spirit of unity and brotherhood the members of Orchard Park worked together to erect a beautiful and practical sanctuary. In May 1975 an overflow crowd attended the dedication of this house of God on Hunter Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

When the Herman Kroekers received a call to Komoka, Ont. in June 1979, we were again without a shepherd. The Lord provided for our needs as the brethren Victor Loewen, George Wichert and others stepped in to fill the gap. Our prayers for a pastor were answered in the arrival of the Ernest Dyck's from Quebec in November 1980. Truly we have seen the hand of God working in Orchard Park for the past 10 years. A special 10th anniversary celebration was held in January 1981 to reflect and to praise God for His leading. We have grown to a membership of 157 as of April, 1981.

Our Sunday School, Boy's Brigade, Pioneer Girls (shared with Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel), Young Peoples, Mid-Week Bible Studies, Choir are thriving endeavours for which we praise God. Together with all the churches of our brotherhood may we ask God to be our vision as we look to Him for the future.



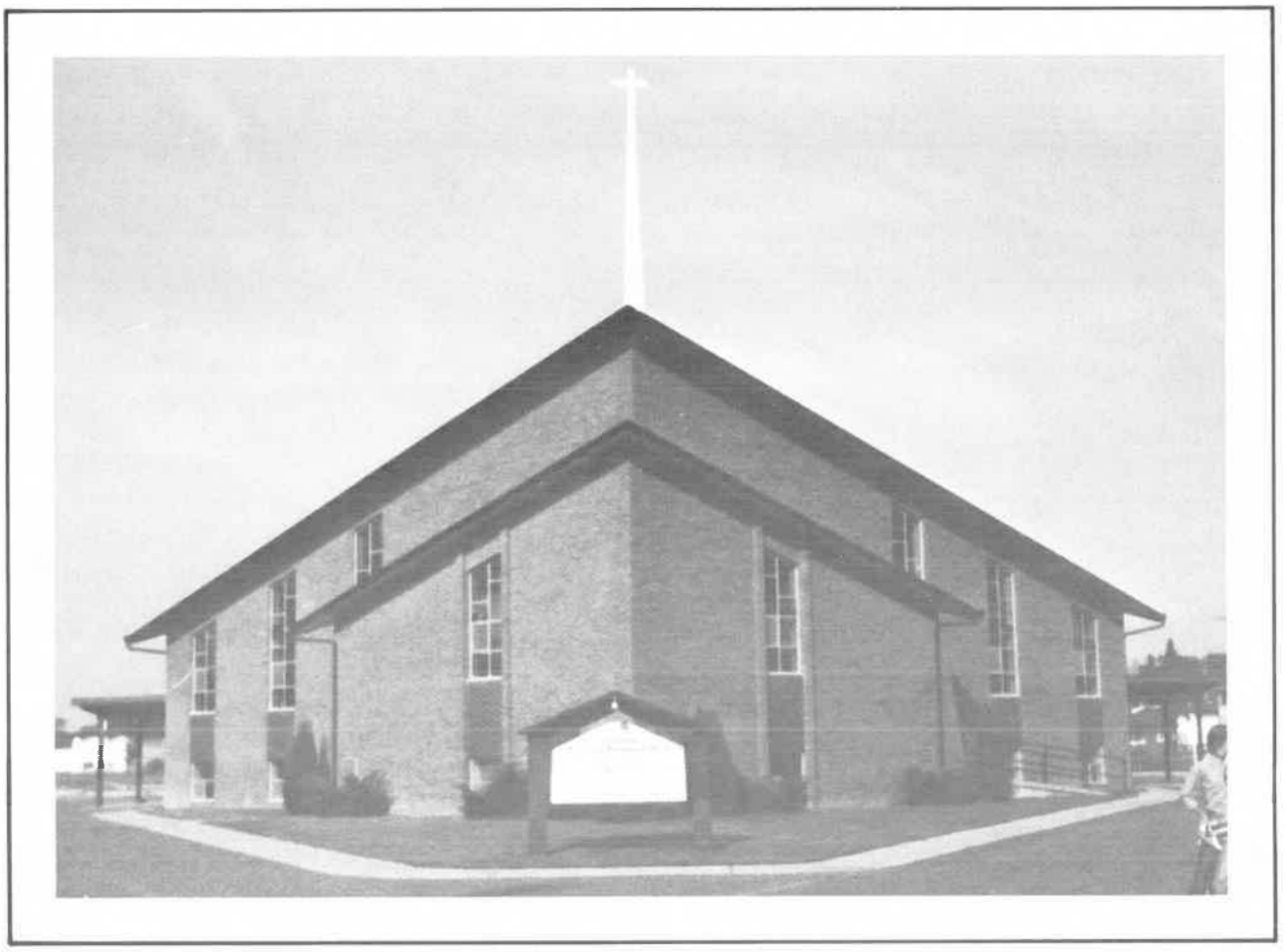
Orchard Park Baptism June 1/75.



Laying of Orchard Park cornerstone '74.

GRANTHAM M.B. CHURCH
1973 -

By Joyce Schimpky





Pastor Aaron Schmidt & Mrs. Schmidt in foreground - 1974-1980. Second row - several of leadership personnel over the years: L-R: Peter Block, Peter J. Dick, John Eckert, and Henry Pauls.

On Sunday, April 15, 1973, with songs of praise, the third Mennonite Brethren church in St. Catharines was dedicated. The unusually shaped sanctuary was a departure from the traditional rectangular shaped churches. With benches arranged in a semi-circle around the pulpit, the atmosphere was suited for warmth of fellowship.

The structure which cost $320,000 has a capacity of 415, and has five large open concept Sunday School areas, a baptistry, a library and a gymnatorium. The church was built with the voluntary giving of 12,000 hours of manual labour, and 3,000 free hours of supervisory and architectural help. Grantham has its origin in the Scott Street church and both shared the project of its construction.

At the outset the 225 members were served by a three member pulpit committee: Rev. Peter J. Dick, John Eckert and Peter Block. An active membership willingly involved itself to set the church program in motion.

With the arrival of the pastor Aaron Schmidt and his family in June 1974, the pulpit committee evolved into the Board of Elders, a group to assist in overseeing the spiritual life and teaching ministry of the church. Seven deacon couples continue to provide a watch-care ministry for the entire membership.

One special member at Grantham, Rev. Peter J.

Dick, has provided spiritual leadership since the birth of the congregation. He sees this church as one characterized by love and concern shown by the members, one for another and for those who visit.

During the first five years, the church grew by about 100 members. Some growth was through transfers but much has been through friendship evangelism. The desire for a church in west St. Catharines resulted in the formation of a new congregation. Members from Grantham, Fairview and Vineland joined to form the Fairview-Louth church which was organized in February, 1980.

Christian Education programs have been an integral part of church growth. Weekly club programs, library resources, Sunday School classes, music ministries and youth activities are all avenues where members experience fellowship and opportunities for service.

Members at home are "salt and light" as they serve the Lord in business, industry, medicine, education or the home. Several from the congregation have gone to carry the Gospel to "all the world" in word, in song and deed.

Annual highlights which the congregation enjoys are music programs, youth activities and the church picnic planned by the Sunday School. An unforgettable experience for the church choir was the visit to Dartmouth, N.S., in May 1978.

In August 1980, the membership bade farewell to its pastor, the Aaron Schmidt family. Presently the membership of 348 is given spiritual leadership by a committed Board of Elders. At the end of eight years we join together to say, "The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad."



Grantham (St. Catharines) Mennonite Brethren Church had the joy of baptizing seven young people on January 7. They were (second row, l-r) Tina Penner, Kerry Braun and Connie Braun; front row, Gary Carter, Bonnie Carter, Carol Crux and Lisa Block. With them is pastor Aaron Schmidt. 1979.



The newly-organized Grantham Church of St. Catharines, Ontario, conducted its first baptism on September 23. On the picture are the pulpit committee with the baptized members, left to right, Rev. John Eckert, Rev. Peter Dick, Laura Ewert, Robert Ens, Eileen Dyck, Kenneth Heidebrecht, Linda Wall, Arthur Enns, Carol Thiessen, Jeffrey Voth, Olive Enns, Donald Fast and Peter Block of the pulpit committee.

EVERGREEN HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP (Simcoe) 1975 -

By John Penner





Pastor Herman Plett and family 1979 -.

The Evergreen Heights Christian Fellowship had its official beginning on May 4, 1975 in the West Lynn Public School, 18 Parker Drive, Simcoe, Ontario.

For several years prior to the above date a number of families living and working in Simcoe and area had the desire to begin a fellowship because of the distance from the Port Rowan M.B. Church and the expansion of industry in the area that would attract people to the area. After considerable unofficial discussion and exchange of ideas the pastor, Walter Janzen of the Port Rowan M.B. Church called a meeting of all those concerned at the home of Henry Klassens in November of 1974. The number in attendance was almost overwhelming with 12 families represented. Two of these families were members of other congregations but lived in the area and were interested in joining an M.B. fellowship.

It was decided to meet one Sunday evening a month until such time as it was advisable to meet as a group each Sunday. These meetings served to unite the group in fellowship and in mind. Then on May 4, 1975, with the blessing of the Port Rowan congregation the group met for the first time in the auditorium of the West Lynn Public School with approximately 45 people present. With such encouraging members and obvious interest the fellowship became a reality and an M.B. Church



"A Camp-out" - Circa 1977: Pastor Bert Friesen (1975-79) at far right.

was planted in Simcoe as a branch of the Port Rowan M.B. Church.

Rev. Jacob Penner volunteered his services to help the fellowship with the ministry of the word. It soon became apparent that in order to grow, the fellowship would need the services of someone who could devote more time to the needs of the adherents and to the building of the church fellowship. With this in mind, the brethren were encouraged to consider the question of conference affiliation, a full time worker and related matters.

The first baptism was held together with the Port Rowan church on April 16, 1976 at which time 4 young people were baptized and joined to the fellowship.

After some discussion with the Board of Church Extension it was recommended that the fellowship consider becoming an indigenous church and become a member church in the Ontario Conference of M.B. Churches. It was then that contact was made with the Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns, and at a meeting with the Board executive in May of 1976, the brethren were encouraged to apply for membership in the conference at its June meeting. Having met all the requirements for admission, application was made to the conference executive.

In June of 1976 the Evergreen Heights Christian Fellowship Church (Mennonite Brethren) with 23 members was officially accepted by the Ontario Conference at its annual meeting in Kitchener.

After much prayer and seeking the Lord's will in the matter of a pastor, the group called Br. Bert Friesen to pastor the flock. Br. Friesen, who grew up in the Niagara Peninsula, received his training at M.B.B.C. in Winnipeg, Goshen, Indiana, and at St. Andrews College in Scotland. He was duly installed as pastor in October of 1976.

A new beginning is not without trials and concerns. A number of couples soon purchased homes and moved elsewhere but the opposite was also true in that several couples from other areas moved in to take their place. The core group remained constant to give stability to the group.

The Pastorate of Herbert Friesen ended at the end of January 1979.

Being without a pastor we called in various people to speak at our Sunday morning services, and as a group, we carried on with the regular church functions.

In June of 1979 contact was made with Herman Plett, who was a graduate of Emmanuel Bible College, Kitchener, who was looking for a pastorate. He came and spoke at our Sunday morning service. Further contact with him revealed that he was looking for a position with a small church and he felt that ours was a challenge to him. The Church membership decided to employ him on a part time basis to begin with since our finances were rather low at that time. Our attendance on Sunday morning began to increase and people were being saved. This brought the church to a decision of employing

Pastor Plett on a full time basis. The Ontario Conference was contacted for financial assistance and also the M.B. Church at Port Rowan.

We have had several baptisms and our membership has risen from 19 to over 40, most of those being new Christians, for which we praise the Lord.

Our Sunday School is not large, but consistent. We have more adults than children at present.

A Christmas Concert has been held each year with a good attendance. Sunday School picnics have always been a highlight.

A church campout was organized in the summer of 1977 and has been held each year. A weekend in July has been set aside for this purpose.

Our Young People have had several Youth Winter Retreats - with the Young People from Mountview Church, Stoney Creek.

Anniversary Services have been held each year since our beginning with a special speaker and special singing group to highlight the day.

On February 7, 1981 we as a church had a Fund Raising supper for our Church Building Fund which was followed by special music from four different groups; with an attendance of over 300 people and an offering of over $12,000.00 in cash and pledges.

We are still meeting at the West Lynn School, but are working on a project to purchase a piece of land for our future church building.



Bible Study Group followed by a birthday celebration.

Sunday-School Picnic.

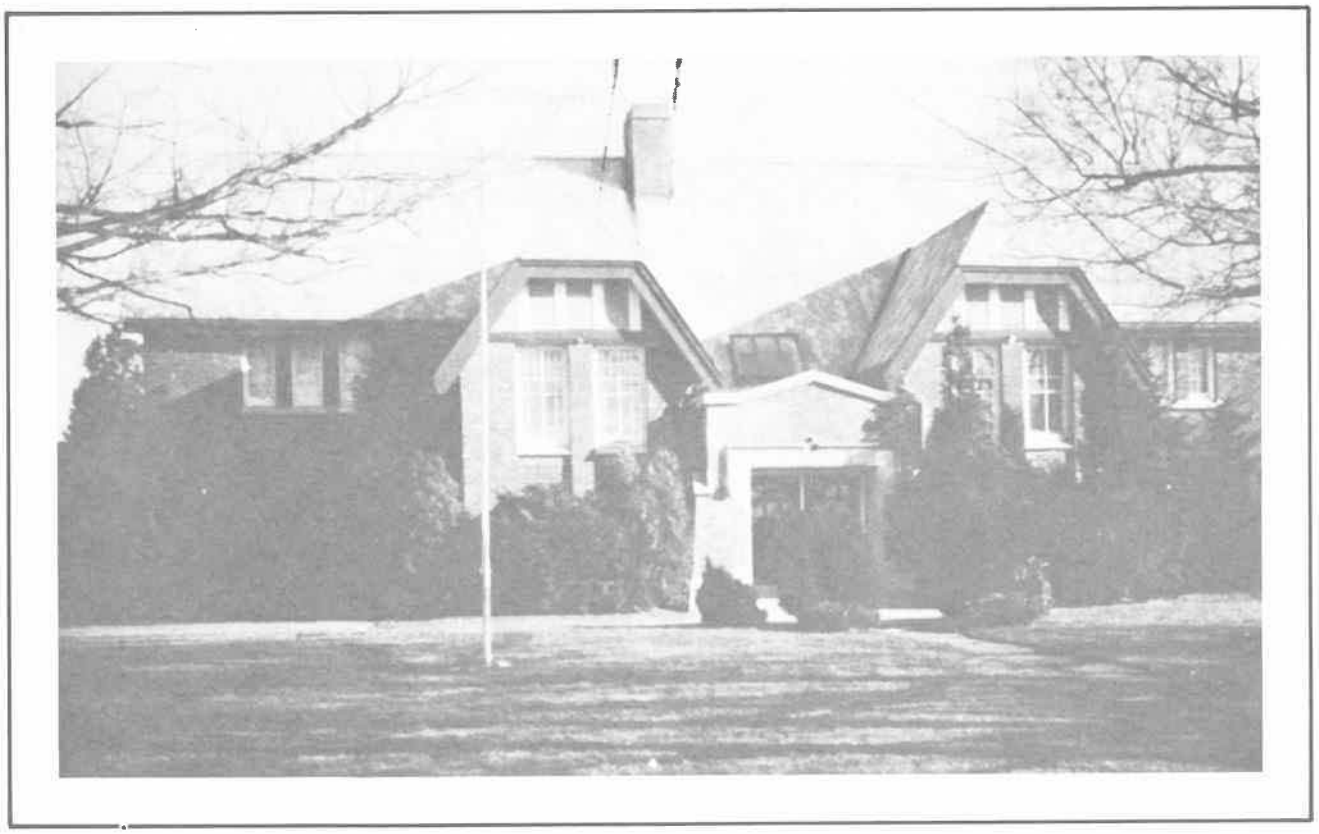




A "Water Baptism".

FAIRVIEW-LOUTH M.B. COMMUNITY CHURCH
1979 -

By Josie Martens





John Eckert, The Church's Associate Minister and wife Viola and family.

Fairview-Louth Mennonite Brethren Community Church had its beginnings in the fall of 1979 when a charter group of members from three churches in the St. Catharines-Vineland area purchased an old school from the Lincoln County Board of Education. The school, having just celebrated its 60th anniversary, had been closed and put up for sale by the Board in June of that year due to declining enrolments. Concerned citizens, particularly those living close to the school, were fearful about the building's future, and one non-Christian individual suggested to an M.B. acquaintance, Jacob Warkentin, a number of times that the school ought to be used as a church.

Encouraged by these comments and the fact that many M.B.'s lived in the community, this brother discussed the possibility with the pastors of the



A sign, built to complement the church's English-Tudor architecture, welcomes guests from the front lawn.



The 1980 women's ball team. Front row (l-r): Helen Lockyer, Ev Krause, Ellie Enns, Denise Moise, Josie Martens, Ruth Esau. Second row: Bev Durksen, Lora Warkentin, Carol Doerksen, Chris Zieschang, Debbie Bearinger, Maggie Esau, Hilda Braun. Coaches - Walt Esau and Ron Martens at the rear.

Vineland, Grantham and Fairview churches. Interest in the project developed quickly and the group's bid to buy the school for $81,000 was accepted by the Lincoln County Board.

In December of that year a charter membership of about 45 people had committed themselves to worshipping God together in Louth. Regular services were delayed until February, 1980, though, to allow time for the new fellowship to get acquainted through weekly Bible studies, prayer, testimonies and business sessions.

There was much work to do as is the case whenever a new church is established. The church's first board, elected November 18, 1979, and consisting of the following individuals, Jake Warkentin (moderator), Ron Martens (secretary), John Hildebrand (treasurer), Peter Warkentin (trustee), Erwin Krause, Abram Wiens, and Dave Penner (members at large), spent many hours planning and preparing. Positions for Sunday School teachers, Bible Study leaders, janitorial work and so on were filled on a volunteer basis.

Prayers, expressing a desire that others from the neighbouring community would join us, were quickly answered and the classroom used for Sunday morning services was no longer adequate. Renovations were begun in March, 1980, just one month after commencement, under the leadership of Erv Krause, Pete Warkentin and Dan Doerksen, with most of the work being done voluntarily by the congregation. Even the women, banishing all fears of scaffolds and stepladders, got involved, undertaking the painting of the project. The two original 60-year-old classrooms had been transformed into a bright sanctuary, a spacious foyer and a large nursery, essential to a membership of predominantly young growing families.

These changes in structure were completed in time for the official opening of the church held on June 1, 1980, with Dr. George Shillington as guest speaker. The event was well attended by the community. Also held that month was the first Sunday School picnic. Since the church's property includes excellent playground facilities, there was no need to go elsewhere for such an event.

With a ball diamond on the premises, the women of the church formed a ball team and joined the local church league. This proved to be an excellent avenue of outreach as several community women have also become involved.

Being a small fellowship of about 31 families (6 of whom are not members), it has been fairly easy for Fairview-Louth to meet its goals to create closeness and unity. The special needs of all age groups are considered. Since approximately fifty per cent of the Sunday morning congregation are children, a story is told at every service. Young people's meetings are held every other week for the teens and in place of boys' and girls' clubs, Sunday School teachers frequently arrange parties and outings for their students, to fulfill social and emotional needs. An active children's choir does much to preserve our rich Mennonite musical heritage. The adults, also, meet monthly for a social activity and this, too, fosters outreach.

During the fall of 1980, the congregation witnessed some other very important "firsts" as well. Though the fellowship believes strongly that members are to minister one to another to a great extent, a definite lack in the preaching and teaching ministry was detected, and thus, John Eckert, a local high school vice-principal, and his family were called in September to join the church, to aid in this area. Brother Eckert dedicates himself to preaching the Word clearly and convincingly, while the administrative duties



Tammy Hildebrand, Jackie Warkentin, (front, l-r), Greg Bradner and Matthew Eckert (back, l-r) were the first people to be baptized by the Fairview-Louth congregation.



Children and adults alike enjoying a hike along the Bruce Trail.

are carried out by a very able moderator, Jake Warkentin, and the church board.

A first family weekend retreat was held in November of 1980 at the Fair Havens Bible Conference grounds in Beaverton, Ontario. The church witnessed its first baptism on December 7 with four young people committing themselves to Christ and to the fellowship. Then on New Year's Eve, Sam and Ann McAdorey shared their moving testimonies of how God had transformed their lives and joined the church, becoming the first neighbourhood couple to identify with the congregation.

Further renovations to the building were made in February, 1981, changing the old dark school basement into four attractive Sunday School rooms. Also, kitchen facilities were installed, a library was opened and an organ and new piano were purchased for the sanctuary.

After a year of God's rich blessings at Fairview-Louth, the congregation is now seeking God's direction for His choice of two deacon couples to assist Abram and Anna Wiens, presently serving in this ministry. A building fund has also been established to accommodate in the future those whom the fellowship trusts the Lord to send its way.



The congregation enjoying a meal together on opening Sunday. Facing the camera (r-l), Anna and Abram Wiens (deacons), Jacob Warkentin (moderator) and his wife, Helen.



Jubilee Conference Audience, February, 1981.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY CHART 1957-1982

YEAR	MEMBER TOTAL	BAPTISMS	DEATHS	EXCOMM.	MINISTERS	DEACONS	S.S. STUDENTS
1957	1,936	44	12	9	32	27	1,704
1958	2,146	58	11	9	37	33	1,776
1959	2,196	73	16	6	38	36	1,824
1960	Change in Conference Year. From November to June						
1961	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1962	2,189	66	12	4	NA	NA	NA
1963	2,239	63	12	8	NA	NA	NA
1964	2,265	69	15	7	NA	NA	1,856
1965	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1966	2,461	61	21	5	NA	NA	NA
1967	2,511	55	13	0	NA	NA	1,904
1968	2,611	66	17	7	NA	NA	2,504
1969	2,679	94	15	5	NA	NA	NA
1970	2,690	88	19	2	NA	NA	NA
1971	2,786	131	25	6	NA	NA	NA
1972	2,813	110	23	20	NA	NA	NA
1973	2,886	123	18	10	NA	NA	NA
1974	2,995	102	17	4	NA	NA	NA
1975	3,096	157	25	6	41	65	2,724
1976	3,136	131	26	10	NA	NA	2,695
1977	3,252	144	29	12	NA	NA	2,733
1978	3,264	90	28	6	NA	NA	2,651
1979	3,365	102	19	11	NA	NA	2,569
1980	Change in Conference Year. From June to February.						
1981	3,410	131	23	12	NA	NA	2,664
1982	3,442	138	28	17	42	85	2,333



Herman Plett, Pastor at Evergreen Heights Christian Fellowship reports on the work in Simcoe at Jubilee Conference 1981.